

FEBRUARY 19, 1994  
COLUMBIA  
North Korea celebrates 'dead leader's' birthday  
BEOL (R) — North Korea's leader-in-waiting, Kim Jong-il, celebrated his 35th birthday on Friday with a little sign yet to be seen. The sign was a final transfer of power from his aged father, Kim Il-sung, to his son. The sign was a final transfer of power from his aged father, Kim Il-sung, to his son. The sign was a final transfer of power from his aged father, Kim Il-sung, to his son.

### Israeli official rejects Arafat charges

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel on Friday denied charges by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat that it was spreading arms in the occupied Arab lands in hopes of creating chaos under Palestinian self-rule. "We utterly deny it," a government official, who spoke on condition he not be named, told Reuters. In an interview with the Jordan Times, Mr. Arafat accused Israeli troops of spreading arms in the occupied territories. "There is a very terrible trade of arms going on under the auspices of some Israeli officers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip," Mr. Arafat said. Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, speaking on Israeli radio, was more critical of Mr. Arafat's remarks. "I consider it a big mistake on his part and I hope it will not hinder the completion of the negotiations so that we may conclude the issues on the agenda with regard to Gaza and Jericho and proceed to implement the decisions taken," he said.

# Jordan Times

An International and Political daily newspaper published by the Jordanian Press Syndicate  
جورديان تايمز يومية  
عن المؤسسة الصحفية  
الرأي

### U.N. commission condemns Israel

GENEVA (API) — The U.N. Human Rights Commission on Friday reiterated its annual condemnation of Israel but welcomed the government's plans to give limited autonomy to the Palestinians. In a series of resolutions, the 53-nation commission demanded that Israel withdraw from Palestinian and Arab territories it occupied in the 1967 war. It criticised Israeli human rights abuses and torture of detainees and called on Israel to allow all Palestinian detainees to return. The United States defended its ally and voted against the resolutions, while West European nations abstained. The Third World majority on the commission succeeded in pushing through the criticism. In one sign of encouragement for Israel, a motion sponsored by the United States and European nations welcoming the peace process passed by 48 votes to two. It expressed "its full support for the achievements of the peace process thus far, in particular the declaration of principles on interim self-government arrangements signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and the agreement between Israel and Jordan on the common agenda."

Volume 18 Number 5542

AMMAN SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1994, RAMADAN 9, 1414

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

### Fighters prepare for new Afghan battles

KABUL (R) — Rival fighters in the war-torn Afghan capital Kabul used the last day of an uneasy four-day ceasefire on Friday to dig new trenches for renewed fighting while thousands of civilians fled the city. Sporadic rocket exchanges erupted overnight and fighter jets of forces loyal to President Burhanuddin Rabbani bombed districts around the headquarters of his chief opponent Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to the south of the city. Pakistani Foreign Minister Asif Ali Zardari was travelling to the eastern Afghan town of Jalalabad for talks with Mr. Hekmatyar on bringing food supplies to the beleaguered Afghan capital and on ways to end the latest fighting.

### UAE oil minister resigns

ABU DHABI (AP) — Oil minister Youssef Omeir has resigned and the new acting minister will be Health Minister Ahmad Saeed Al Badi. Oil Ministry officials said Friday. The officials did not give the reason for the resignation of Mr. Omeir, who had held the oil portfolio since late 1990. Mr. Badi remains health minister and becomes acting minister of petroleum and mineral resources. Mr. Badi, a 33-year-old holder of a B.A. degree in international law, took his first cabinet post and was named minister of health in the cabinet formed in November 1990 by Prime Minister Sheikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

### U.N. report censures Iran

GENEVA (AP) — Iran continued to rely heavily on a mix of executions, torture, repression and intimidation to enforce obedience to its Islamic revolutionary ideals, a U.N. report said Friday. The report by special investigator Reynaldo Galindo Pohl said despite international criticism, the high level of executions had apparently continued unchecked. In his report to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, the Salvadoran jurist said at least 35 people were executed between September and December last year. He said it was difficult to find an overall reliable figure as the Iranian press no longer reported regularly on the events. The government said in a written response included in the report that the death penalty was "rooted in divine principles." It said many of the executions were for drug traffickers and Iran was "doing the world a favour," by clamping down on narcotics. The 61-page report said there was "persistent and widespread torture and ill-treatment, chiefly to force detainees to confess, make public statements of repentance, or inform on the organisations they belong to."

### Attack on Turkish party office kills 1

ANKARA (AFP) — One person was killed and 11 wounded Friday when a bomb exploded in the building housing the pro-Kurd Democracy Party (DEP), the state-owned TRT television channel reported, quoting a city official. The powerful bomb, equipped with a delayed action mechanism, was placed in a lift below the party offices, Radio Anatolia said. As well as the casualties, two of whom were seriously injured, it caused damage and started a fire. The bomb attack, which was not immediately claimed, was the fourth against the DEP this month. The last, on Monday, caused no casualties. The DEP, which has 17 seats in parliament, supports the Kurdish struggle for autonomy which is being waged with heavy loss of life on both sides by the banned Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) against security forces in southeast Turkey, where the Kurds are in a majority.

## Yemeni leaders arrive today to sign reconciliation accord

By a Jordanian Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh and a host of government leaders and politicians as well as mediators arrive in Amman today to sign a reconciliation and reform agreement to end a political crisis haunting their country since April last year. The signing ceremony, hosted by His Majesty King Hussein, will take place at the Raghadan Palace tomorrow. Arriving in Amman to attend the event on Friday was former South Yemeni President Ali Nasser Mohammad, who was ousted in a party coup in 1988. Mr. Nasser Mohammad, who now lives in Damascus, was active in trying to settle the Yemeni crisis.

According to Jordanian officials and Yemeni and Arab diplomatic sources, Sultan Qaboos Ben Saad of Oman and Palestinian Leader Yasser Arafat were invited to attend. But there was no confirmation by late Friday they would attend. Like King Hussein, both Sultan Qaboos and Mr. Arafat were also involved in efforts to mediate the Yemeni crisis, sparked by differences between the leaders of North and South Yemen which merged in May 1990 to produce today's united Yemen. After months of negotiations, a Yemeni committee of mediators drafted the accord that will be signed tomorrow. Both the president and vice-president have accepted it as a blueprint for the future political and economic course for their country. Jordan has offered its armed forces officers to supervise the merger of the armies of the former North and South Yemen.



Ali Abdullah Saleh



Ali Salem Al Beidh



Minister Mujahid Abu Shawareb

had offered the Arab League Secretariat in Cairo as the venue for the event, and a senior official of the European Union (EU). Leaders of all Yemeni political parties, including President Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and Mr. Beidh's Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) as well as the Al Islah Party, the third partner in the ruling coalition with GPC and YSP, as well as independent Yemeni politicians are also scheduled to arrive today. They include Al Islah's Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar, who is also speaker of the Yemeni parliament, Abdul Aziz Abdul Ghani, member of the Supreme State Council, Presidential Council member Salem Mohammad Salem, Prime Minister Haidar Abu Bakr Al Attas, Deputy Prime

Minister Mujahid Abu Shawareb, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Wahab Al Alfi, and opposition Al Rabita party leader Abdul Rahman Al Jafri. Also expected in Amman are former Yemeni presidents Abdul Rahman Iryani and Abdullah Salal. Mr. Abu Shawareb, an independent Yemeni politician, paid a visit to Jordan Thursday to consult Jordanian officials

on preparations for the signing ceremony. He returned home Thursday but is expected back today. Salem Mohammad Salem, the Presidential Council member and a leader of Mr. Beidh's YSP, arrived Friday. In arrival comments as well as in an interview with Jordan Television, Mr. Salem emphasised his party's desire to ensure that the reconciliation and reform agreement succeed and contribute to Yemeni nation-building. "The common factor that binds the Yemeni people together are much stronger than the factors that tend to divide them," Mr. Salem said, reaffirming his party's commitment to living up to the provisions of the agreement. The YSP official said the problems that plagued post-unitary Yemen did not originate from personal differences between President Saleh and Vice-President Beidh, but were "inherited" from the days when the Yemeni nation re-

mained split into two for more than 300 years. He blamed unideological "extremist elements" for the state of violence that endangered Yemeni unity. Mr. Salem paid tribute to King Hussein's mediation efforts and said Yemenis were glad that they were signing the agreement in Amman, which has set an example in democracy for the Arab World — an example, he said, is emulated by Yemen. The reconciliation and reform agreement includes 18 points on which Mr. Saleh and Mr. Beidh have reached agreement. They call for increased powers to the prime minister and cabinet members and decentralisation of authority on the district level and basic changes in the country's economic policies. Yemen, a country of 14 million people, have stuck oil. It hopes to reach a production capacity of 300,000 barrels per day this year.

## Arafat: Israeli hesitation endangers peace process

WASSENAAAR, Netherlands (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat warned Friday that Israeli hesitation was endangering the Middle East peace process. "The Palestinians have taken major steps and courageous decisions. It is now up to the other side to prove that he is willing to achieve peace. Otherwise, the whole peace process will lose its credibility," Mr. Arafat told a news conference at this town near the Hague. In response to a question, he said the PLO believed it should not take longer than one month to conclude a global agreement on Palestinian autonomy. He recalled that the agreement signed by the PLO and Israel last year provided for the Israeli army to withdraw from Gaza and Jericho this coming April 13. Last Saturday in Tunis, Mr. Arafat said he expected a final agreement with Israel to implement a statement of principles on Palestinian autonomy to be signed at the end of this month. Israeli and Palestinian negotiators are scheduled to meet in Cairo next week to try to settle

outstanding issues. The last round of negotiations, which ended Thursday in Taba, were described by both sides as "serious" and "useful." Mr. Arafat said here Friday that the Israelis had "promised (him) that in Ramadan, there will be a release for a part of the (Palestinian) prisoners ... which means that all prisoners will be released at the end of this period." He repeated that the Palestinians "can't sign a final agreement without having a guarantee for the release of all our prisoners." Palestinians, using Red Cross figures, estimated about 9,000 of their people are held prisoner. They want them released before July 13, the date designated in the statement of principles for elections to be held in the West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Arafat, who arrived in the Netherlands on Thursday and was due to leave later Friday, held a surprise meeting early Friday with Nelson Mandela, head of the African National Congress (ANC). However, he refused to confirm a report that they had discussed a future visit by Mr. Mandela to Israel. (Continued on page 3)

The report was made by a Dutch committee for the support of the democratic process in South Africa, which quoted ANC officials in Johannesburg. Mr. Arafat described himself and Mr. Mandela as "Friends and brothers" and said: "I will offer him an open invitation the moment I will arrive in Jericho." Following the meeting, Mr. Arafat held talks with Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, Foreign Minister Pieter Koopmans and Deputy Economic Minister Yvonne Van Rooy on Dutch aid for building a port at Gaza as well as farming and tourism in Gaza. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Israel and the PLO may soon clinch a deal to launch self-rule in Gaza and Jericho. "We have moved forward this week in a very promising way, and if this continues there is a good chance the negotiations will end soon," Mr. Peres told Israeli radio. His remarks echoed those of PLO chief negotiator Nabil Shaath, who said Thursday that the four days of talks in



Jawdat Shoul

## Sboul tipped to succeed Badran in high council

By Nermeen Murad Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Former Minister of Interior and lawyer Jawdat Sboul appears to be the foremost candidate to replace former Prime Minister Mudar Badran, who resigned from the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution last week, Parliamentary sources said Friday. As was largely expected, former Prime Minister Zeid Rifai was appointed by consensus last Tuesday to the influential council but his election drew a strong reaction from his political archrival Mr. Badran, who submitted his resignation from the prestigious council in protest. Mr. Rifai was elected to replace the late former prime minister, Bahjat Al Talhouni, in the nine-member panel composed of the speaker of the Senate, five senior judges and three senators. Mr. Rifai, after the approval of his nomination Tuesday, was to join Mr. Badran and Senator Ahmad Tarawneh. But Mr. Badran apparently in a protest against "the real situation of Mr. Rifai," boycotted that session and submitted his resignation from the council, sources said. "Mr. Sboul is the best choice among the lawyers in the Senate," one senator, speaking on condition of anonymity, told the Jordan Times Friday. He explained that while former Deputy Prime Minister, Interior and Justice Minister Salem Massadeh would have been the most qualified "it was not expected that Mr. Massadeh would accept the nomination." Before the appointment of Mr. Rifai last week, his nomination was opposed by a minority of the Senators who wanted the Upper House to choose between Mr. Massadeh and former Prime Minister Ahmad Obaidat. The fact that Mr. Massadeh did not figure in the first choice and that Mr. Badran had chosen to express his dis-

## Rabin hails Assad's offer to meet Israeli for first time

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Friday welcomed Syria's decision to allow the first visit ever to Damascus by a member of the Israeli parliament after 45 years of war. Israeli-Arab Deputy Abdul Wahab Darawshe said the Syrian authorities agreed Thursday to his request to lead a delegation from the Arab community here to present condolences to President Hafez Al Assad on the death of his son Basil in a car accident last month. "It's an important step forward, hopefully just a first one on behalf of the Syrians," Mr. Rabin's spokesman Gad Ben Ari said. "It's the first time that Assad has agreed to meet public with Israelis."



Abdul Wahab Darawshe

It will be the first time since Israel was founded in 1948 that an Israeli citizen will be welcomed in Syria. "We believe the decision comes after criticism voiced here in Israel," Mr. Ben Ari said. Mr. Rabin had cited Syria's earlier refusal to grant Mr. Darawshe entry as a sign of Mr. Assad's unwillingness to make peace with Israel. Mr. Darawshe, one of seven Israeli-Arab members of Israel's 120-seat parliament, said the official purpose of the visit was limited to paying condolences to Mr. Assad. Nonetheless, Mr. Darawshe did not rule out political talks if

Israeli army radio, adding it was a marked change in Syria's attitude. Foreign Minister Shimon Peres also welcomed the trip but was more circumspect. He said on Israel Radio it was a "positive sign... although it has its limitations, it isn't yet a burst of opportunity." Asked whether Israel was sending any messages to Mr. Assad, Mr. Peres replied that there were other channels for doing so. Mr. Darawshe, who expects to leave in the next few days, called Mr. Rabin and got approval to make the trip. "He agreed to the visit, but did not ask me to carry any message," Mr. Darawshe said, adding the trip was important for Israel's 200,000 Arab citizens because it helped give them a place in the Arab World. In Damascus, the government press on Friday accused Israel of doing everything in its power to sabotage the peace process. "Making sure that the peace process fails has become the key, declared intention of Israel," charged the ruling party Al Baath newspaper. By raising tension in Lebanon, where Israel has threatened to retaliate if its northern border area is attacked, the Jewish state aims "not only to undermine the process, but to prepare for an explosion in the region," it said.

## Israelis see 'Palestine'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Nearly two out of every three Israelis think that the Middle East peace process will lead to the creation of a Palestinian state, according to an opinion poll published Friday. Sixty-four per cent saw a Palestinian state coming, 30 per cent did not and six per cent had no view on one of the hottest issues in Israeli politics today. The Dahaf Institute survey for the Yediot Aharanot newspaper was taken among 524 people after the ruling Labour Party's General Secretary Nissim Zivili raised a storm last week with a prediction that a Palestinian state was inevitable. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin stressed that government policy was against a sovereign Palestinian country between Israel and Jordan, although he has spoken of a Palestinian "entity." The opposition missed an opportunity to embarrass the government Wednesday when it failed to mobilise a majority for bills aimed at preventing the government from agreeing to a Palestinian state, despite having the support of the Shas Party. The bill submitted by Uzi Landau (Likud) was defeated by a vote of 46 to 39; an almost

## Israel in mock raids after Katyusha attack

TYRE (Agencies) — Israeli warplanes carried out mock raids over resistance positions on Friday after Katyusha rockets crashed into Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon, police said. The latest tension came amid intense diplomacy to avert a new outbreak of fighting between the Iranian-backed Hizbollah and Israeli forces. An official in Beirut, declining to be named, said Syria and Lebanon had agreed to call on anti-Israeli fighters to "cool things down" in South Lebanon, following Israeli threats of reprisals. The decision was taken after three hours of talks in Damascus on Thursday between Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, the official said. Israel had threatened to launch a massive operation in South Lebanon after a Katyusha rocket fell on northern Israel on Wednesday, causing damage to a factory but no injuries. On Friday, the warplanes flew low-altitude missions over Hizbollah positions north of Israel's self-declared "security zone" and broke the sound barrier over Beirut. Guerrillas fired four Katyushas at the zone overnight, without causing casualties, police said in the southern

port of Tyre. One rocket exploded just 100 metres from a post of Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia. Police said SLA gunners fired 20 shells in retaliation. The remains of a second Katyusha were found in the Galilee region on Friday, military officials said. The Katyusha caused only slight damage when it crashed into a banana plantation on Wednesday, near a factory hit by another rocket the same day. Neither rocket caused any casualties. Concerned that violence along the Israel-Lebanon border is spreading, Secretary of State Warren Christopher called Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa to urge maximum restraint while Mideast peace efforts proceed. State Department spokesman Michael McCurry condemned the rocket attack Thursday as an effort to disrupt the peace process. He declined to say whether Israel was being asked not to retaliate, as it customarily does. Mr. McCurry, without going into details, said Mr. Christopher called Mr. Sharaa a few hours after Wednesday's attack in an effort to keep the conflict from escalating. (Continued on page 3)

## Communities distance themselves from Faisal-Kreisha dispute

By Mariam M. Shahin Jordan Times Staff Reporter AMMAN — Tribal representatives of the Bani Sakher, Circassian, and Chechen communities issued a joint statement this weekend distancing themselves from the dispute between deputies Toujan Faisal and Jamal Kreisha. Ms. Faisal has accused Mr. Kreisha of insulting her Circassian community during an exchange Saturday. "Mr. Kreisha damned the Circassian people and all those whose roots are in the Caucasus," she said. The statement by the communities said the feud was a "parliamentary and not a tribal issue." The statement "diffused what could have become a serious community feud," said one Lower House of Parliament deputy. Mr. Kreisha, who has refused to confirm or deny Ms. Faisal's accusation that he cursed her ethnic group, told the Jordan Times, "I meant harm to no group of people or even Ms. Faisal as an individual. "The situation was heated and things were said."

Part of a JD 1 million "slander, libel and assault" lawsuit planned by Ms. Faisal against Mr. Kreisha is based on her charge that he insulted her person and ethnic community. Mr. Fawaz Maher Burmamt, one of several Circassian community leaders in Jordan, visited Ms. Faisal the morning after the dispute which, according to Ms. Faisal, ended with Mr. Kreisha throwing an ashtray at her. Mr. Burmamt held several meetings with senior members of Mr. Kreisha's central bedouin Bani Sakher tribe and representatives of the Circassian and Chechen communities. Both the Chechen and the Circassians are central Caucasus Muslim peoples who were settled in what was Transjordan during the last century by the Ottoman Turks who encouraged the groups' migration because of their farming skills. The Circassians and Chechens make up no less than 2.5 per cent of Jordan's total population. The decision to issue a joint community statement was taken at a Feb. 17 meeting

among Circassian, Chechen and Bani Sakher representatives. "We consider this a parliamentary dispute which should be dealt with through parliamentary norms. This is in no way a tribal matter," read the statement, which was signed by Mr. Kreisha's brother Sheikh Nayef Kreisha, Circassian community leader Burmamt and Lower House of Parliament Deputy and Chechen leader Sheikh Abdul Baqi Gannmo. The statement stressed the need for national unity as well as respect for pluralism, democracy and human rights. However, not the entire Jordanian Circassian community is willing to distance itself from the Faisal-Kreisha dispute. Another Circassian community leader, Mr. Mohammad Mamser, former vice-president of the University of Muja, is reportedly following the situation up with Ms. Faisal and "intends to stand by her side" if her lawsuit against Mr. Kreisha ever goes to court, sources close to Ms. Faisal said.



## Both sides 'determined' to make progress on Cyprus — Clark

NICOSIA (AFP) — U.N. special envoy Joe Clark said Friday that both the Greek and Turkish-Cypriot leaders were "determined to make progress on a package of confidence-building measures for their divided island."

Bui a fire at a mosque on the Greek side of Nicosia — treated as arson by police — served as a reminder that there is opposition to the U.N. package.

"We have observed there is determination on both sides. There are still a few areas in which both parties need to come closer," Mr. Clark said after a second round of talks with Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash.

"On these issues, there will be consultations with the contribution of the ambassadors of the five permanent members" of the U.N. Security Council — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. Mr. Denktash told reporters

that the main issues were the timetables for the reopening of Nicosia airport and the coastal resort of Varosha, as well as "the status of the U.N. administration" of both sides.

Both sides have accepted in principle the confidence-building measures (CBMs) aimed at breaking the 20-year deadlock on Cyprus.

Nicosia airport, closed since 1974, would be reopened under U.N. supervision and Varosha, a Greek suburb of the coastal town of Famagusta under Turkish control, would be transferred to U.N. administration for the Greeks to return.

After the first day of Mr. Clark's shuttle mission between Mr. Denktash and President Glafkos Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot, the Cyprus Mail newspaper said: "So far, so good. Goodwill all round."

Mr. Denktash warned Thursday that a breakthrough was not imminent. "We are all

working with goodwill and sincerity for a good result. So give us time," said the veteran Turkish-Cypriot leader.

At the medieval Bayraktar Mosque, a fire late Thursday damaged a wooden staircase and the ceiling, police said. The fire brigade was sent to the disused mosque by the capital's venetian walls after an anonymous telephone call.

"It must have been done to stop this exercise from getting on," said Mr. Denktash, who was to travel to Ankara on Monday for a three-day working visit to discuss the CBMs.

"If there is going to be a balanced agreement suitable for both sides, this sort of thing cannot stop it."

Mr. Clark, whose mission ends Saturday when he flies to New York to brief on Secretary General Boutros Ghali, has said all key issues were being negotiated and maps were on the table.



Thousands of civilians, like this family handling a cartload of belongings along one of Kabul's streets, took advantage of a four-day ceasefire to escape areas of fighting between rival factions in the Afghan capital. Reports indicated Friday the factions were bracing for a new bout of battles (AFP photo)

## Algerian exiles arranged arms shipment — reports

ALGIERS (AP) — Exiled Islamic fundamentalists organised an arms shipment seized aboard an Algerian freighter bound from Germany, local news media reported.

The weapons were apparently bound for Islamic insurgents, whose two-year campaign to overthrow the military-backed government has claimed 3,000 lives.

Algerian newspapers reported that members of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and other fundamentalists, living for the most part in Germany, arranged the arms shipment.

It marked the first time that a shipment of weapons from Europe bound for the insurgents has been seized and publicly reported.

Authorities found 20 hunting rifles, 15 pistols, telecommunications equipment and binoculars on board the ship, the media reported Wednesday.

day. The Algerian captain was arrested.

The seizure is certain to bolster government demands for European countries to crack down on exiled fundamentalists, whom it claims are running a terrorist support network.

Germany recently warned Rabah Kebir, the leading exiled FIS spokesman, to stop making statements that appeared to support terrorism. France has charged three fundamentalists with terrorism conspiracy.

According to Algerian press reports, citing security sources, the ship left Hamburg and stopped in the Belgian port of Antwerp before going on to Algiers.

There was no word on when it arrived in the Algerian capital or when the seizure was made. The government has not officially confirmed the reports.

## Libya lashes Maghreb union

CAIRO (AP) — Libya has lashed out at the Arab Maghreb Union for failing to help end the international boycott against Libya over the Pan Am 103 case.

Libyan Television, in a statement Thursday, the fifth anniversary of the formation of the economic cooperation union, said the union has achieved nothing.

"Five years after its creation, the treaty of this union has remained mere ink on paper... because it has not served the Arab people in this region," the television said.

"Suffice it to say that this union was incapable of holding a meeting and was unable to lift an unfair embargo imposed on a member state."

The broadcast was monitored by the BBC in London. The union links Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania in co-operation agreements as a step towards comprehensive Arab unity. But bureaucratic tangles and regional rivalries have kept it from becoming a viable network.

The criticism came a day after a televised statement by Libya Leader Moammar Qadhafi saying the two Libyans wanted in the Pan Am 103 case can be tried in the United States or Britain but only by a Muslim court.

"Should there be a court like this," Colonel Qadhafi said on Libyan Television. "We will not mind if they are given capital punishment."

The Libyan suspects, alleged to be agents of Col. Qadhafi's intelligence services, are accused of planting a bomb aboard a Pan Am jet in December 1988 that sent it crashing into Lockerbie, Scotland, killing 270 people.

To force Libya to surrender the men to the United States or Britain, the United Nations imposed air, arms and diplomatic sanctions in April 1992. They were tightened last December to include an embargo on most oil equipment and a freeze on overseas funds.

Col. Qadhafi has adamantly refused to surrender the men to the United States or Britain. His offers of an international trial or trial in a neutral country have satisfied neither the Americans nor the British.

## Kurtzer: Multilaterals embark on new phase

WASHINGTON (USIA) — The multilateral negotiating track of the Middle East peace process has moved into a new phase aimed at demonstrating to the peoples of the region that peace can have immediate benefits, according to a senior U.S. official.

Daniel Kurtzer, deputy assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, who led the United States delegation to last week's meeting of the multilateral steering group in Ottawa, outlined the action programme Feb. 16 at a State Department news briefing.

"While direct bilateral negotiations involving Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and the Palestinians are dealing with the core issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict — territory, peace and security — a complementary set of multilateral negotiations has been underway since early 1992 to address broader regional issues," Mr. Kurtzer explained.

After an initial period of "familiarisation" and "educating the parties as to the depth and scope of the problems which they had agreed to address," Mr. Kurtzer said that as many as 13 Arab representatives joined with Israel and a number of parties from outside the region to address problems in five areas — regional economic development, refugees, arms control and regional security, the environment, and water resources.

During the last round of working group meetings, in October and November of last year, "several of the working groups actually formulated and began implementing concrete projects," Mr. Kurtzer said. Among these were a rainwater catchment project in Gaza, a mutual declaration on arms control and regional security, and other actions on environmental issues, wastewater treatment, and desertification.

"In other words, each of the groups began to focus on one or two specific projects that could be seen by peoples in the region as... potential fruits of peace... at a time when the core issues of the conflict were also being addressed," he said.

Last week's extraordinary session of the multilateral steering group in Ottawa decided on three issues designed to give even more impetus to this process:

— At the urging of the re-

gional parties, the multilateral steering group "will now take a much more active role in trying to increase the pace and the scope of the work of the working groups," Mr. Kurtzer said.

Since there is a great deal of optimism that agreements will be signed and implemented between Israel and the Arabs over the next several years, the multilateral steering group decided to formulate guidelines that will help create an environment conducive to the implementation of agreements reached in the bilateral negotiations.

— The steering group "has given urgency to the formulation of a set of regional developmental priorities," much like those undertaken 18 months ago with regard to the West Bank and Gaza. "We've decided to do the same thing now on a region-wide basis in order to stimulate economic development and more concrete projects on the part of the working groups," he said.

While conveying "a sense of movement on the part of the multilateral process," Mr. Kurtzer said he did not want to imply that the multilateral process was outstripping the pace of the bilateral peace negotiations.

"The bilateral negotiations remain at the core of resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute," he pointed out, noting that all the parties in the Middle East "insist that the core issues of this conflict be addressed before a more normal relationship develops among them."

But as that relationship develops as a result of successes in the multilaterals, he said, the multilaterals have now begun to move further and faster to begin addressing some of these concrete problems and again to create an environment in which implementation of agreements will make much more sense," he said.

Mr. Kurtzer acknowledged there have been problems. Since the beginning, Syria and Lebanon have chosen not to participate in the multilateral track of the peace process because they are concerned that track may get ahead of the bilateral peace negotiations.

The United States and Russia, co-sponsors of the peace process, have kept the Syrian and Lebanese governments "very closely informed of what we're doing in the multilateral

over the past two years "and we have used every opportunity to try to encourage their participation," he said.

The continuing absence of Syria and Lebanon is "an inhibiting factor in trying to develop broad-scale regional planning," he said. "What we're trying to do is to make it attractive to Syria and Lebanon to participate where they see their own interests affected."

While the refugee issue "is perhaps one of the most sensitive political issues in the entire process," he said, the refugee working group has developed an agenda with seven action items on it, "one of which is called family reunification which all sides recognise is a means of beginning to address the aspirations of some Palestinians to return to homes that they may have left for whatever reasons."

The United States, which is shepherding the issue of training in both the refugee group and the economic development group, has already conducted a number of training missions for refugees, he said. "We're also trying to... make these self-sustaining programmes."

So far the working group has put off trying to agree on the numbers of refugees to be involved, he said, but has agreed to divide them into three groups — refugees from 1947-49, displaced persons or refugees from 1967, and those who have been displaced from their homes for other reasons as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The working group's definition of a refugee is "anybody displaced as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict," Mr. Kurtzer said, thus avoiding defining "some of the issues which only the parties, in their final status negotiations," will have to address. The working group has also decided that issues relating to repatriation are more appropriately going to be handled in the discussions on final status, he said.

The fact that the heads of delegations of the direct bilateral negotiations met in Washington a couple of weeks ago and then resumed their negotiations Feb. 15 "is a testament to the commitment of Syria and the other parties to continue this process," Mr. Kurtzer stressed.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Three Qatari fighters killed in Bosnia

DOHA (AFP) — Three Qatari volunteers have been killed fighting alongside the Bosnian Muslims against the Serbs, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs announced here Thursday. The ministry, quoted by the official ONA news agency, said the three — Ahmad Al Abdullah, Abdul Aziz Mohammed and Saad Ali — were buried as "martyrs" in Bosnia. A spokesman gave neither a place nor a date for their death, nor specified if other Qatari fighters were in the former Yugoslavia. Volunteers from Muslim countries have often been sighted on the battlefield in the ranks of the Muslim-led Bosnian government army, but it is unusual for Arab countries to confirm their presence.

### Kurdish deputies may face prosecution

ANKARA (AP) — A parliamentary commission on Thursday paved the way for parliament to allow prosecution of three Kurdish deputies accused of having ties with a separatist Kurdish guerrilla organisation. Serif Ercan, the head of the joint constitutional and judiciary commission, announced after a meeting that the commission decided to lift the parliamentary immunity of Leyla Zana, Orhan Dogan and Mahmut Alinak. The decision will be final if the 450-seat parliament approves it. When the vote might come was not known. The deputies are accused of advocating Kurdish separatism. Mr. Dogan also faces charges of providing shelter to Kurdish guerrillas in his parliamentary residence. The Kurdish guerrilla organisation, PKK, has been fighting for an autonomy in southeastern Turkey since 1984. There is a growing concern in the country about what will happen with local elections March 27 in the southeastern region. The Kurdish Democracy Party, DEP, which is believed to have close ties with the PKK, threatens to protest the elections if numbers of their candidates, jailed recently, are not allowed to run. Similarly a trial of the Kurdish deputies could escalate tensions in the region.

### Qadhafi puts Libya under Islamic law

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libya introduced Islamic law on Thursday and said it would also switch to an Islamic "solar" calendar unique in the Muslim World. The new legislation will work on an "eye-for-an-eye" principle in cases of premeditated murder. Thieves will have their hands cut off and men and women caught committing adultery will be flogged. Drinking, making or possessing alcohol is banned and offenders will be fined and imprisoned. Alcohol consumption is already prohibited but the law was not always applied with rigour. Polygamy was legal in Libya but from now on a husband will have to get permission in court from his first wife if he wishes to take another wife. Libya has also decided to adopt a solar calendar starting from the birth of the Prophet Mohammad in 571. This would put the country in the year 1423. The rest of the Muslim World uses a lunar calendar beginning in 622 the year of the Hijra when the Prophet fled Mecca to Medina to escape persecution. It is 1414 in other Muslim countries. For the first time since Colonel Muammar Qadhafi came to power in 1969, Islamic preachers or imams will be permitted to issue "fatwas" or religious decrees. When Col. Qadhafi seized power he abolished the post of mufti, the country's highest religious authority. In recent months Col. Qadhafi has called for stricter application of Islamic law while at the same time being fiercely critical of Islamic fundamentalist activists in the Arab World.

### BBC correspondent ordered out of Tunisia

LONDON (AFP) The BBC World Service has protested against the expulsion from Tunisia of its resident correspondent in Tunis, saying it would review its coverage of Tunisia and northern Africa, as a result. The BBC said the press accreditation of correspondent Alfred Hermina had been withdrawn, and he had been ordered to leave Tunisia by Friday. "The Tunisian authorities have given no reason for Mr. Hermina's expulsion: in spite of requests from the BBC," said World Service News Editor Bob Jobbins. "The BBC has total confidence in him. He is a highly professional correspondent who has shown great energy and commitment in his reporting of North Africa."

### UAE in drive to protect fish

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is taking measures to protect its fish as part of a campaign to repair ecological damage caused by oil spills and fishing abuses. Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Said Al Ragbani outlined measures to streamline the fishing sector, at a meeting earlier this week of the federal national council, the appointed parliament. Mr. Ragbani was questioned about the ministry's plans to end abuses by fishermen. "We are drafting a federal law on the exploitation, development and protection of the fish wealth in the UAE," he said. "We have presented the law to the authorities concerned to seek their opinion." Mr. Ragbani gave no details of the draft law but most of the UAE's seven emirates already ban fishing nets that kill small fish and damage the sea bed and mangroves. Catching turtles is also strictly banned in all the emirates.

### Russian officer killed near Afghan border

DUSHANBE (AFP) — A Russian officer with the frontier guard stationed in Tajikistan was found dead near the border with Afghanistan on Friday, the head of the Russian border guards said here. The officer had set out the previous day from Pyandzh with three members of the Tajik security forces, but there was no sign of them when the officer's body and car were located, the sources said. The Tajik security ministry for its part reported that four members of its security forces were killed and three wounded in an overnight ambush in the same region by 15 unidentified armed men. Armed Islamic groups opposed to the neo-communist regime here mount raids across the border from Afghanistan.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

#### PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Les Aventuriers De L'Espace  
17:41 L'Ecole Des Fars  
18:30 Bonsoir  
19:00 News in French  
19:15 Ushuaia  
19:30 News in Hebrew  
20:30 News in Arabic  
20:35 The End Of A Brave Man  
21:30 Family Matters  
22:00 News in English  
22:50 Feature Film: "A Killer Who Sinned"

#### PRAYER TIMES

04:56 Fajr  
06:13 (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
11:59 Asr  
14:57 Maghrib  
18:42 Isha

#### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740  
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285  
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624591  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637481  
Be la Salle Church Tel. 661757  
Terrence Church Tel. 622366  
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543  
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 773131  
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773561  
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751  
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526  
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328  
German-speaking Evangelical Church Tel. 684195  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 623024, 654932  
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675911  
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

#### WEATHER

It will be sunny, moderate, with clouds appearing at different altitudes and winds becoming southerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly active and sea calm.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 3 / 16  
Aqaba 9 / 22  
Doebs 11 / 16  
Jordan Valley 8 / 21  
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 15, Aqaba 21. Humidity readings: Amman 23 per cent, Aqaba 35 per cent.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Nidal Al Dahleh 827195  
Dr. Bassam Karadshah 757200  
Dr. Yehya Abdul Salam 736072  
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih 754988  
Firas pharmacy 619192  
Fardous pharmacy 778336  
Najoud pharmacy 637055  
Najoud pharmacy 637070  
Al Salan pharmacy 636730  
Yacoub pharmacy 644945  
Shimshan pharmacy 637660  
Najib pharmacy 847632

REPAIN: 623101  
Abdali Telephone Repair 661101  
Jordan Television 773111  
Radio Jordan 774111  
Water Authority 681101  
Jordan Electric Authority 815615  
Electric Power 637111

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111  
Civil Defence Department 661111  
Civil Defence Immediate 712121  
Rescue 630341  
Civil Defence Emergency 199  
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777  
Fire Brigade 891228  
Blood Bank 712121  
Highway Police 943402  
Traffic Police 896390  
Public Security Department 630321  
Hotel Complaints 675800  
Price Complaints 661176  
Water and Sewerage 897467  
Complaints 787111  
Complaints 787111  
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121  
Overseas Calls 810220  
Central Amman Telephone 623101  
Abdali Telephone Repair 661101  
Jordan Television 773111  
Radio Jordan 774111  
Water Authority 681101  
Jordan Electric Authority 815615  
Electric Power 637111

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre 813483/32  
Khadija Maternity, J. Amn. 642016  
Akish Maternity, J. Amn. 642412  
Jahat Amman Maternity 642362  
Malhas, J. Amman 636140  
Palestine, Shmeisani 6441714  
Shmeisani Hospital 669131  
Al-Musharraf Hospital 845845  
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737  
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 777101/2  
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26  
Army, Marka 891611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital 662249/51  
Amal Hospital 674159  
ZARQA: Zarqa Gov. Hospital (019)963223  
Zarqa National Hospital (019)963560  
Jahat Sina Hospital (019)963560  
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (019)963560  
IBRD: Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275  
Ibn Al Nafies Hospital (02)247100  
AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

### Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20	Vienna (QA)
06:30	Sanaa (Y)
10:30	Rome (AZ)
12:45	Dubai (EM)
22:10	Paris, Damascus (AF)
23:15	Amsterdam (KL)
23:35	Cairo (MS)

### DEPARTURES

#### Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00	Beirut (RJ)
06:00	Amman (RJ)
11:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:30	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
11:45	Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:05	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
12:05	Cairo (RJ)
20:15	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)
21:00	Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
21:30	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

#### Other Flights (Terminal 2)

08:15	Beirut (ME)
11:30	Sanaa (Y)
11:40	Larnaca (CY)
18:35	Vienna (QA)
19:45	Rome (AZ)
00:00	Dubai (EM)
00:00	Damascus, Paris (AF)
00:15	Amsterdam (KL)
00:30	Cairo (MS)

### HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday

### MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	550 / 650
Banana	600 / 680
Banana (Mukammal)	620
Cabbage	70 / 80
Carrot	200 / 220
Cauliflower	140 / 160
Clementine	260 / 300
Cucumbers (large)	180 / 220
Cucumbers (small)	380 / 280
Eggplant	170 / 80
Garlic	1200 / 900
Grape Fruit	900 / 800
Green beans	220 / 120
Lemon	180 / 100
Marrow (large)	180 / 120
Marrow (small)	300 / 200
Olives (green)	700 / 500
Onion	470 / 120
Onion (dry)	350 / 300
Onion (green)	380 / 300
Pepper (hot)	380 / 300
Pepper (sweet)	340 / 260
Potato	250 / 180
Tomato	120 / 80
Spinach	270 / 200
String beans	800 / 650







## Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation  
Established 1975  
مجلس التحرير يومية عربية سياسية مستقلة تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.  
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

## Rhetoric, all the same

LATE LAST week a group of seventy-five people announced the formation of a "committee to resist submission and normalisation." The committee's main task, the group said in a statement, would be to prevent the peace process from culminating in normalisation of relations with Israel.

We cannot quarrel with any group of people who wish to voice their concern about the prospects and direction of peace in the area. It is common knowledge that waging peace is just as difficult as engaging in war activities, and the process would normally entail deep division in the ranks of the peoples affected by it. Just as the Israelis have of late witnessed an upsurge in extremism in opposition to the implications of the ongoing efforts for peace in the region, it is likewise natural that the Arab side would develop strong pockets of resistance to the new political, economic and security conditions that peace could bring. After generations of animosity and hostility between the Arabs and the Israelis, it should not be unexpected that a change in the geopolitical climate in the region would cause tremors on the two sides.

Still, one would have wished that the opposition forces to peace between the warring parties in the Middle East on both sides of the fence channelled their energies into more constructive directions by offering viable alternatives to current peace efforts. On the Israeli side, the ultra nationalists and the right would have nothing to do with trading land for peace or with the recognition of the Palestinians as people with legitimate rights and aspirations. Their extremist position is for all intents and purposes a prescription for the continuation of the past five decades of warfare and suffering. In other words, such Israelis would rather commit their people to a perpetual cycle of violence and insecurity for decades to come, if not centuries, than invest in peace that would offer the Arab side, the Palestinians included, its legitimate rights and its people an opportunity to lead a normal life. In this sense, there is an uncanny meeting of minds between Israeli hardliners and those Arabs who also do not want to give peace a chance. The hardliners on both sides would thus resist and fight without offering anything beyond what the Palestinians and other Arab parties have been hearing and experimenting since the inception of the Palestinian conflict.

The sterile perspective presented by hardliners and the bankruptcy of their views have emerged from the events of the last fifty or more years in Middle Eastern history. Since the utility or futility of any policy decision can best be gauged by its results, the consequences of the line of thinking presented by the group of seventy five are only too well known to the public to deserve an additional comment. We just have to say that if some of us, few as they may be, can sit and wait for miracles to happen to salvage us and our cause, it is doubtful our people and country can afford the same luxury all the time.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AT RA'I Arabic daily Friday cast doubt on the so-called preparations by NATO forces to stem Serbian attacks on Muslims in Sarajevo and other parts of Bosnia. The ultimatum given to the Serbs to end their fighting is a mere attempt to mislead the world and once the deadline for the Serbs to pull out their guns ends, the attackers would resume their aggression on the city of Sarajevo indifferent to the NATO threats, said the paper. Saying that David Owen, the European mediator, is failing in his mission since his arrival in the former Yugoslavia, the paper said that Lord Owen has been bent on killing innocent Muslims and the raping of Muslim women, but rather with means of covering up for the Serbs' aggression. The Europeans, who claim to be Christians, are now bent on annihilating the Muslim people of Europe not for the benefit of Christianity, but rather for selfish interests and a colonialist purpose. The same Europeans said the paper have been bent on killing both the Christians and the Muslims of Iraq and maintaining a siege on the Iraqi sick and wounded, charged the daily. The paper said that, regrettably, the Arab regimes are continually closing their ears to the cries of the children and women in Bosnia and Iraq and are busying themselves with reconciliation efforts with the Israelis. It said that under the so-called new world order, the leaders of the colonial powers are employing a formidable machinery to destroy what is left of Christianity, transforming it into a religion in the hands of criminals who continue, to carry out their vendetta against the other nations of the world.

## Jordanian Perspective

# Cairo deal brings dismay to Palestinians

By Dr. Musa Keilani

THE AGREEMENT that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres produced in Cairo on Feb. 9 has predictably drawn dismay among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as the East Bank. Expectations that the shape of the interim arrangement for Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories would be the forerunner of eventual Palestinian independence have suffered a serious blow even among the born-optimists and those who tend to see the proverbial half-full side of the glass.

For starters, the Cairo deal effectively consolidates, if not legitimises, the Israeli grip on the occupied territories. For all practical purposes, it leaves no sign of the Palestinian right to sovereignty in their land. Indeed, the Palestinians are allowed to raise their flag at the border posts. But then so were the Vichy regime under the Germans and Antoine Lahad under Israel's self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon. But were they symbols of independence or subservience?

Granted, the "final status" of the occupied territories is to be negotiated in three years from now, and, technically speaking, the ground is open for the Palestinians to secure their legitimate territorial and political rights through negotiations, regardless of the shape of the interim arrangement. But, before we get into the business of "final status" negotiations, it seems that the Israelis are hell-bent on retaining "sovereignty" and diluting the Palestinian quest for statehood as much as possible.

The writing is on the wall. Indications to the man on the street in Jordan are that the so-called Gaza-Jericho agreement could turn out to be the "final status" rather than an "interim" arrangement.

Proclamations by Israeli politicians from the Labour Party that the negotiations would inevitably lead to the creation of a Palestinian state are nothing but diversionary tactics and are not worth even the paper that carried the reports.

The unanswered questions point to a predetermined Israeli rejection of the Palestinians' legitimate national and political rights, not to mention an independent Palestinian state. These include: If indeed the entire occupied territories are to be placed under Palestinian self-rule for five years pending a "final status" solution, why then the haggling now over a few dozen square kilometres of land?

We have often heard the term "progressive autonomy" from both sides, indicating that major towns and cities in the West Bank would be turned over to Palestinian control in a matter of months after the self-rule arrangement is put in place. Why then going to the extremes in refusing to accept a logical size of area where autonomy could take off in the first place?

Similarly, if the Palestinians are supposed to assume full control over their affairs, barring external security, why then is the Israeli insistence on retaining a veto over who enters and leaves the occupied lands?

After all, is it not in the interest of the Palestinian self-rule authority to maintain law and order in the areas under its control and not allow anyone to endanger the autonomy arrangement through staging incidents that could be construed as "security threats" by the Israelis and scramble the peace deal?

Again, why the dispute over the size of the police force? Even in an optimum scenario, the total number of Palestinian policemen and family members who would enter the occupied territories is 25,000. Why should the Israelis get alarmed over that number, given the fact that it represents only 0.5 per cent of the over four million Palestinians living in the diaspora?

**"The PLO leadership, which boasts of having a strong 'constituency' in Jordan, has to take into consideration that the Kingdom has a concern beyond the immediate relationship of one Arab party supporting another's decisions and moves in the context of peace negotiations with a common enemy."**

That, said however, there is no questioning of the fact that agreements to these arrangements were given or are in the process of being given by the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian People, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). As such, Jordan does not challenge the decision, particularly that the Cairo agreement has been proclaimed by our own strategists as having "calculated" the January accord on security aspects signed by the Kingdom and the PLO.

As far as relations between two entities are concerned, the PLO could not ask for more than Jordan has given in terms of support for the Sept. 13 accord despite its reservations and the Kingdom's international moves in support of the Palestinian struggle in their negotiations with Israel.

Jordanian complaints that the level of the PLO's coordination with the Kingdom was not of a level that meets the challenges of the day stemmed from several aspects:

Jordan, as a sovereign and independent country, has its own national concerns and it would refuse to be a party to any agreement in which it has to play a role dictated by parties which did not get its approval. There is no doubt that this message is clearly understood but not acted upon by the PLO leadership.

The two-day Jordan-PLO meeting in Amman last week appeared to have gone a considerable way in clearing the air, as Jordanian officials have affirmed. Joint committees have been revived, and the focus is on specific arrangements that would be put into place during the interim Palestinian self-rule period. Hopefully, the PLO side is sincere in its undertakings with Jordan and we would see more of coordination in a manner that strengthens both sides in their respective negotiations with Israel as well as the multilateral talks aimed at creating an atmosphere, where peace agreements and treaties would hold.

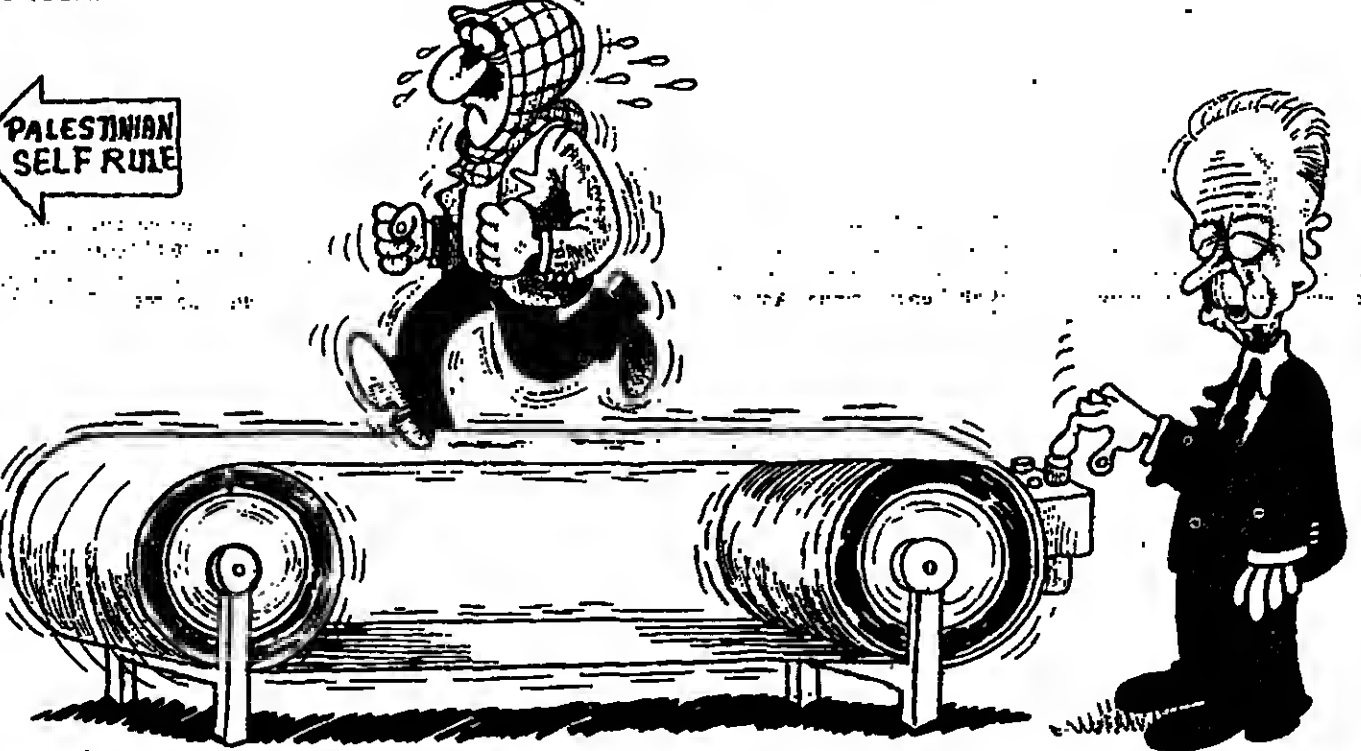
But what is left unsaid in the entire deal is how Jordanians with Palestinian roots, who have a very deep interest in seeing a just and equitable settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, see the state of affairs. That is not to say that all of them are eager to pack up their bags and return to their homeland at the first given opportunity. But they definitely seek Palestinian independence and to be at least told that they have a right to exercise their options in an atmosphere free of ifs and buts.

The PLO leadership, which boasts of having a strong "constituency" in Jordan, has to take into consideration that the Kingdom has a concern beyond the immediate relationship of one Arab party supporting another's decisions and moves in the context of peace negotiations with a common enemy.

And that is a cause for worry since the repercussions for Jordan, God forbid, of the PLO falling short of the aspirations of the Palestinians will be heavy, particularly if the Kingdom is perceived as having gone ahead unreservedly with a course of PLO action which may not bode well for the Palestinian cause in the end.

I do not claim to have a ready-made solution to the problem. But, for one thing, the PLO could do a lot by closer consultations with the experienced strategists of Jordan in advancing the process of negotiations and ensuring that whatever possible is done to allay the fears of the PLO's self-styled constituency in Jordan.

M. KAHL



## THE WEEK IN PRINT

# Cairo deal detrimental to Palestinian rights; Yemeni reconciliation is cause for joy

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

CRITICISM OF the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Cairo agreement, domestic issues and the situation in Bosnia and Iraq dominated the themes in the local Arabic press in the past week.

The Cairo deal, signed by the PLO and Israel, has taken the Palestine issue into a dark tunnel with no sign of light at the end, said Arafat Hijazi, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab.

The fact that the deal was in favour of the Israelis was underlined by a spokesman for the Israeli army, who said the army participated actively in drawing up its provisions over matters related to security, said the writers. "We fear that in the absence of sufficient Palestinian military and political experts, Israel would continue to secure more gains at the expense of the Palestinian," said the writer.

The Palestinian masses were not expected to take to the streets and express their joy over the Cairo agreement because it is only a mere deal that would probably be exploited by the Israelis to their own benefit, said Taher Adwan in Al Dustour. The masses seldom trust political solutions which fail to be implemented on the ground and which are normally of

benefit to the enemy, he said. The writer said that the PLO leadership, like the other regimes of the Arab world, does not inform the masses of the deals concluded with the Israelis in a true expression of lack of democracy and absence of close contacts and cooperation between the rulers and the ruled.

Commenting on a statement to the Israeli press by Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in which he advocated the creation of confederation between Israel, the occupied territories and Jordan, a columnist in Al Ra'i said that Israel is using the occupied territories as a tool to achieve a federal entity with Jordan. Tareq Masarweh said that through this scheme, Israel is clearly trying to fulfill its old dream of creating a substitute Palestinian entity at the expense of Jordan. He said that under the Cairo agreement, Israel remains in full charge of the crossing points between the West Bank and Jordan, enabling the Jewish state to control the travel of Palestinians both ways, and ensuring that more Palestinians go out than those who come into the West Bank.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that while the Arab masses

decried the Cairo deal, Washington has naturally welcomed it because it is clearly in favour of the Jewish state.

Tareq Masarweh and Taher Al Adwan welcomed the expected deal for reconciliation between the leaders of the Yemeni people. One cannot hide the Arab masses joy over the end of the Yemeni political crisis and the Jordanian people in particular take pride in the fact that the reconciliation is to be crowned with the signing of a document in Amman said Masarweh. He expressed hope that the document would be implemented and serve as an impetus for equality between the north and south in development matters and in helping the Yemeni people to attain their common objectives.

Adwan said that any delay in signing the document and implementing its provisions is bound to backfire and adversely affect the morals of the Yemeni people. The document to be signed by the Yemeni leaders in Amman, he said, sets an example for the leaders of the Arab countries to forge the long awaited Arab unity.

Salameh Ekour, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab, reflected on the situation in Iraq and stressed that the Arab countries, which are applying the sanctions on the Iraqi people,

are responsible for their suffering. The writer said that Arab leaders are responsible for the tens of thousands of Iraqi citizens who continually lose their lives due to the lack of food and medicine and are also responsible for future Iraqi boycott of any Arab activities at the political, social and economic levels.

Mohammad Subeini, a columnist in Al Dustour, urged Jordanian women to lead the campaign against those tampering with the food and medicine. "Housewives have to date failed to join the campaign although they are responsible for the well-being of their households and children and they serve as the first defence line protecting their families," said the writer.

Mohammad Daoud, another Al Dustour columnist, expressed fear that the manipulation of merchants dealing with food stuffs would continue unless the government took drastic measures against them.

Referring to the past week's discovery of merchants trying to peddle defrosted meat as fresh meat, the writer said the Ministry of Supply ought to re-examine its present measures concerning the trading in food supplies and should employ qualified personnel to conduct actual inspection of food supplies sold in stores.

## NATO's 'risky' plans

# Allies Sarajevo mission would be tougher than Gulf raids

By Nicholas Dougherty  
Reuters

NAPLES — NATO is assembling the biggest collection of Western air power since the 1991 Gulf war against Iraq, ready to hit Serb forces besieging Sarajevo or elsewhere in Bosnia from bases in Italy.

But military officials say strikes in Bosnia could be a far tougher and riskier operation than the Gulf war, despite the fact that NATO pilots have been able to prepare carefully by flying over their potential targets.

"In some ways, this is the best prepared air campaign in history. The pilots have had an unprecedented amount of time over Bosnia," said one NATO military official.

"But there are different problems, different risks involved here. They take away a lot from that advantage."

In January 1991, allied warplanes blasted Iraqi positions in and around Kuwait, dropping millions of tonnes of bombs, strafing troop positions and using guided weapons to wreck air defences, power stations and other installations.

Then as now, allied forces had full control of the skies and could operate as they liked, around the clock, with virtually no opposition from Iraqi planes or the country's shattered air defences. The U.S.-led coalition lost only a handful of planes.

In addition, the good weather and open desert terrain were ideal for air operations.

But even with those advantages, ground troops were needed to drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait — leading the military to the conclusion that air power can only help to win a war, not do the job on its own.

Even though the battle lines were clearly drawn in the Gulf, there were several incidents of allied planes firing on their own ground forces by mistake in the heat of battle.

Those limitations serve to point up the risks in Bosnia, military officials say.

NATO pilots say they are not greatly worried by Bosnian Serb anti-aircraft fire. They do not have an integrated air defence system backed by radar as did the Iraqis, just some guns and shoulder-launched missiles that Western jets can dodge.

The problems lie elsewhere. It will be much harder to find and hit targets in Bosnia's hilly, wooded terrain than it was in the desert, even though

forward air controllers in Bosnia have worked with NATO pilots to pinpoint targets so far. Serb artillery, mortars and other heavy weapons can be easily moved, where Iraqi weapons were dug in to prepared positions and less mobile.

There is also a much greater danger of killing civilians with air strikes in Bosnia, especially if the Serbs move their weapons into towns and villages.

"There are no definitives in this world, you can't be absolutely sure that you will eliminate collateral damage," said U.S. Captain Jim Pavlica, who flies an A-10 "Warthog" attack plane from Aviano airbase in northern Italy.

Bad winter weather in Bosnia, with low cloud and rain, also means it could be harder to hit targets accurately. Pilots interviewed in the last few days said conditions had been far from ideal for any air strikes.

The biggest concern for NATO, though, is whether its planes can protect U.N. peacekeepers and relief workers on the ground in Bosnia, where there are no clearly defined front lines, if they are attacked in retaliation for air strikes.

NATO commanders are beefing up the U.S., British, French, Dutch and Turkish air forces in Italy with planes suited for a ground attack role. By the end of this week, there will be around 170 fighters, bombers and ground attack jets in Italy or based on aircraft carriers in the Adriatic.

Through mid-air refuelling from tankers, the planes can stay over Bosnia, covering U.N. peacekeepers in enclaves such as Srebrenica and Tuzla as well as Sarajevo, until they run out of ammunition, bombs and missiles.

But the planes cannot hold ground and, if Serb or other forces move in close to U.N. troops, the pilots could risk killing the very people they want to protect.

Western allies are unwilling to consider the only alternatives: pulling the 10,000 lightly-armed peacekeepers out before any air strikes or sending more troops, armour and artillery in to support them on the ground.

"The history of air power, from World War II through Vietnam to the Gulf, has proved that it cannot win a conflict on its own," said another NATO official. "Bosnia has got a lot of risks, the worst kind for pilots."



## The 'smoke' invasion

### Asians puff their way towards world's largest cigarette market

HONG KONG — They are smoking cigarettes in the mountains of Nepal to increase their stamina.

In the Philippines, cigarettes are mixed with healthy images of the good life, hang gliding, skiing and high-speed boating.

And in Vietnam, anything American is good, with Lucky Strike, Marlboro and Pall Mall providing a taste of the affluent West.

Spurred on by the sophisticated marketing prowess of Western cigarette companies, Asians are quickly puffing their way into becoming the world's largest and most lucrative market.

"I am smoking because I feel tired and this cigarette will refresh me," said Ram Bahadur Tamang, a middle-aged porter in Kathmandu. "It gives me strength to carry my heavy load."

Asia already accounts for more than half the world's consumption of cigarettes, according to a report released last month by the British mar-

ket research group EURO-MONITOR.

The report also revealed the region's potential for even more growth, with the average Asian still smoking less than half the number of cigarettes per year than his European counterpart.

"The tobacco companies are pretty much behind this trend in smoking," said Judith Mackay, a Hong Kong-based consultant for the World Health Organisation (WHO) and one of Asia's best known anti-smoking crusaders.

Western cigarette companies, with help from their governments, particularly the United States, have used fair-trade agreements to crack most of the state-controlled cigarette monopolies in the region.

A U.S. government report shows that American tobacco exports grew from \$64 billion to \$142 billion a year in the late 1980s, with about 55 per cent of that due to imports by Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

A rangoon-based diplom-

representing a cigarette-exporting nation recently de-plored what he called the dumping of tobacco products in the developing world by Western nations, where consumption was diminishing.

"I'm a social smoker myself, but I'm frankly disturbed by what we in the developed world are doing," the diplomat said.

Western tobacco companies say, however, that they are only filling the demand for what is a popular and legal habit, and that all the blame should not be placed on them, given that most of these countries had state-owned cigarette companies before.

"We are not guilty, as we are not forcing anyone to smoke, only selling satisfaction like hotels sell hospitality," said Rubul A. Mazumdar, director of the mainly British-owned Bangladesh Tobacco Company Ltd. "Blaming us is unfair," he said.

But Mr. Mackay says that western cigarette companies, unlike the state monopolies,

bring with them sophisticated advertising campaigns that have linked smoking with the region's growing affluence and is attracting more young people and women.

Cigarette companies, many of them American and British, spent more than \$185 million last year for advertising in Asia, according to a survey by Asian advertising and marketing magazine.

"The advertising is not showing Chinese selling to Chinese," Mr. Mackay said. "It shows the Marlboro cowboy riding around, or Caucasians enjoying the good life in a mountain top villa... they are selling a western lifestyle," he said.

Smoking rates in Asia are much higher than in Europe and the United States, where on average 30 per cent of men and women smoke, a number that continues to decline because of tough anti-smoking legislation and campaigns.

Western cigarette companies have found developing countries to be the ripest market to

compensate for dwindling sales at home. Men make up the vast majority of smokers in Asia, although the number of women and children taking up the habit is on the rise, according to WHO statistics.

Vietnam has a smoking rate of between 50 per cent and 80 per cent among men in urban areas, and in Cambodia the rate is as high as 80-to-100 per cent among all men. In Thailand, there were 11.4 million smokers in 1991, a 10 per cent increase from three years earlier, according to the country's health ministry.

China is the largest smoking country in the world, with more than 300 million people having taken up the habit, according to the government's statistics.

China's cigarette market is still fairly restricted to foreign cigarettes.

A Western tobacco company spokesman in India, where 80 billion cigarettes were sold last year, said: "If four people can sell cigarettes why not a fifth." Agency France-Press

## To our health

By Jimmy Carter

THE U.S. tobacco industry has launched a massive campaign to defeat President Bill Clinton's proposal to add a substantial health tax on cigarettes and an equivalent tax on other tobacco products.

As a southerner and a farmer, I care about the plight of the tobacco farmer. But I also care that tobacco killed 419,000 Americans last year. Almost all of them started smoking as children and became addicted before they were old enough to know better. There are real people with real families behind each of those death statistics — people like my father, my mother, both sisters and my brother, all of whom smoked and died of cancer.

President Clinton's proposal would lengthen the lives of an estimated 900,000 Americans by discouraging children from becoming addicted to cigarettes and encouraging

many current smokers to quit. This health tax would extend more lives than any single preventive health measure now under consideration.

The tobacco industry is using its enormous public relations and lobbying resources to try to convince Congress and the American public that a health tax on tobacco would do such a good job of reducing smoking that tobacco farmers and the economy of the south would be devastated. This implies that Americans must keep smoking and dying in vast numbers of preserve tobacco industry jobs and the economic health of tobacco-producing states. This argument is both immoral and factually wrong.

Even if the debate were about tobacco industry jobs vs. human lives, only the tobacco processors would support the sacrifice of thousands of lives to protect a much smaller number of jobs.

But the debate is not about jobs vs. lives. The tobacco industry has distorted the facts about jobs, just as it has manipulated the government and the tobacco farmers for so many years. One recent industry publication projected that the tax would cost 270,000 jobs even though there are only 256,616 jobs involved in the entire U.S. tobacco industry, including farming, warehousing, manufacturing and wholesaling.

Economists and health experts agree that President Clinton's proposal would cause about a 12 per cent drop in smoking. But this would not be devastating for tobacco farmers. Demand for U.S.-grown tobacco would drop by only about 6 per cent because approximately half of all U.S.-grown tobacco is now exported, either as raw tobacco or in cigarettes. Tobacco leaf and cigarettes sent overseas will cause death and disease in other nations but will not be

affected by the health tax.

The irony is that tobacco farmers really are in trouble. More than 40,000 tobacco farms disappeared during the past 10 years, and tobacco manufacturing jobs have fallen 29 per cent. These job losses cannot be blamed on health restrictions; they occurred despite the fact that 28 billion more cigarettes were made in the U.S. in 1991 than in 1983 because of rising cigarette exports.

Farmers and workers are suffering hard times because tobacco companies are now importing more than one-third of the tobacco used in U.S.-made cigarettes, producing more cigarettes overseas and automating production to eliminate manufacturing jobs. While encouraging American farmers to fight tobacco taxes, major tobacco companies are teaching growers in other countries how to produce tobacco for the U.S. market.

Change for tobacco farmers is inevitable. They should pursue their enlightened self-interest in a high health tax on tobacco, with a generous portion earmarked to help tobacco farmers and their communities shift to other sources of incomes. If tobacco companies were truly interested in helping farmers and not just securing profits, they would agree.

Even a much higher health tax increase of \$2 per pack, which polls show is supported by the vast majority of the American public, including two-thirds of tobacco state voters, could be one of the tobacco farmers and the south — not to mention the rest of the country.

The writer, a former U.S. president, is chairman of the Carter Center in Atlanta. The article is reprinted from the Jerusalem Post.

## Hizbollah

### Weighing the options

By Nadim Ladki  
Reuter



Hizbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah: The resistance will go on (AFP)

JIBSHEET, Lebanon — Prospects of peace in the Middle East are forcing even the most radical Muslim fundamentalists in the front line against Israel to consider what once was unthinkable: laying down their arms.

The pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God), whose fighters attack Israeli troops in south Lebanon almost every week, has been grappling for several months now with the issue of what to do if Lebanon and Israel sign a peace treaty.

A senior pro-Iranian source in Beirut says the group has come up with a plan "to face the consequences of such a peace if and when it happens."

He said Hizbollah would disband its 5,000-strong military wing, the Islamic Resistance, once the last Israeli soldier withdrew from south Lebanon.

But it will maintain its political, social and security organs and resist any attempts to normalise ties with Israel.

The source did not elaborate, but Lebanese security sources believe Hizbollah's security organs could spearhead attempts to prevent any trade or economic dealings with Israel.

In the past the security organs have carried out suicide bomb attacks and assassinations against Israeli and Western targets in Lebanon.

The group is also believed to be the umbrella organisation for hostage takers who made Lebanon a no-go zone for Westerners in the 1980s. It denies links with the hostage-takers.

"Our struggle has two fronts: preventing recognition of Israel and (preventing) normalisation of ties with it," another senior pro-Iranian source in Beirut said.

"We are bound to lose the battle or recognition when and if the governments sign peace treaties with Israel. But in the war of normalisa-

tion, we have several means to stop the Arab peoples from accepting the concept of ties with Israel," he said.

Israel and the United States want the Lebanese army to disarm Hizbollah before any Israeli withdrawal from a self-styled security zone in south Lebanon.

But the Lebanese government says resistance to the occupation is legitimate and vows not to curb Hizbollah, the only Lebanese militia that still has arms, before Israel sets a timetable for its pullout.

The guerrillas say they will keep their fingers on the trigger until every Israeli soldier has left.

"We don't trust them, we will not take their word and stop our attacks only on promises," said a Hizbollah military commander identified only as Hajj, interviewed by Reuters at his modest house in the southern village of Jibsheet.

"We will stop only when we see they all left," said Hajj, who according to colleagues has taken part in 40 attacks on Israeli troops.

Hizbollah maintains its guerrilla bases in the south and has a large part of its popular support there. After mounting thousands of attacks since 1983 on Israeli and allied forces its fighters are still learning how to deal with prospect of peace.

"Once the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon ends we know we will have to put down our arms as our immediate goal would have been achieved," Hajj said.

"We don't want to be dragged into any confrontation with the Lebanese army when and if Israel withdraws," he said.

"The army would then want to take over security and we will not try to stop it," another guerrilla explained as a sonic boom from an Israeli jet shook the village.

The Islamic resistance has grown into a formidable force in recent years, pulling off several successful attacks against the security zone.

A senior Western diplomat in Beirut said Hizbollah was "very effective and is a force to be reckoned with."

## Northeast Somalia

### At peace but seeking better life

By Buchizya Mseteka  
Reuter

ALULA, Somalia — Fifty-year-old Mohammad Ahmad Shabel stood up to welcome rare visitors to this barren village at the tip of the Horn of Africa and entrance to the Gulf of Aden.

He cleared his throat. "We need help here," he said.

"This is a peaceful area. We have organised ourselves politically and all we need now is material assistance from donors and the United Nations."

"I think it is only fair the U.N. and donors reward those areas that are peaceful, areas that are beginning to reconstruct themselves, but clearly lack the funds to do so on their own."

It wasn't much of a pitch for money. But peace was about all he had in this very remote and rugged corner of Somalia.

There is a sharp contrast between the tranquility of this district and the banditry and intermittent clashes in the capital Mogadishu between U.N. peacekeepers and gunmen, or the looming tension in the southern port city of Kismayu.

No gunman or clan fighter is to be seen on the streets in Alula, a cluster of thatched huts and a single, dilapidated concrete building northeast of the coastal town of Bossaso.

The last gunshot fired in the area was 18 months ago, residents said.

Alula used to be home to some 7,000 fishing families. But 90 per cent of the population have fled the area since 1992 when killing, looting and destruction swept across Somalia in a civil war fuelled by famine that killed 350,000 people.

Mr. Shabel is chairman of the newly established Alula District Council, one of the 15 set up in Somalia's vast northeast out of 80 for the whole country planned by the U.N. operation in Somalia (UNOSOM).

UNOSOM wants to resurrect government in Somalia, which has been without one since rebels toppled President



MASS STARVATION: Somali women queue for food at a 'feeding centre' in war-ravaged Mogadishu (AFP photo)

Mohammad Siad Barre in January 1991.

But the campaign faces serious resistance, partly because it threatens to wrest power from warlords such as General Mohammed Ahsir Muse, head of the region's only military faction, the Somali Salvation Democratic Front.

"Districts are a good way of reconstructing a country like ours, which has over the last three years degenerated into the 15th century," said Ali Artan Yusuf, a 52-year-old businessman.

Mr. Yusuf, like most Alula inhabitants, belongs to the Majeen clan. He fled Mogadishu when warlord Mohammed Farah Aided's Habr Gedir clan stormed the capital and the slaughter began.

In the last year 54 of the 80 planned councils were formed, including only one of the 15 envisaged for Mogadishu.

The shortfall is due to fight-

ing between gunmen and the 25,000-strong U.N. forces and opposition by Gen. Aided and some other warlords who denounce the councils as tools of U.N. "colonialism."

Under the U.N. plan, district councils should form regional councils and set up a central authority known as the Transitional National Council by the end of February before elections for a new government in 1995.

Ongoing U.N. Special Representative to Somalia Jonathan Howe, a retired U.S. admiral, admits the road to reconstruction is long and bumpy as long as Gen. Aided opposes the U.N. presence.

"But all the same it's encouraging to see areas such as Alula leading the way. People here see no point in antagonistic politics and are now gearing up to a new life," Mr. Howe said during a tour of Alula.

"The international community will reward areas that are

peaceful and ready to rebuild their lives. The message to those who refuse to cooperate is that the international community is no longer patient."

As elsewhere in Somalia, everything from rooftops to water pumps was looted in Alula after the Barre government's fall.

Virtually all families in Alula are destitute but they receive basic essentials such as cooking pots, plastic huckers and metal sheets from aid agencies operating in the area.

But by Somali standards, Alula is a peaceful place.

"It's so beautiful and encouraging here, very different from the south of the country," said Alexa McArthur of the Geneva-based MEDAIR, one of four foreign nurses helping provide some medical care in Alula.

"People here are peaceful and keen to get back to leading their normal lives," she said.

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## German markets disappointed by Bundesbank rate cut

FRANKFURT (R) — German share and bond markets weakened Friday as investors reacted with disappointment to what was seen as only a half-hearted interest rate cut by the Bundesbank Thursday.

After an initially huge rally in the wake of the Bundesbank's half-point cut in the discount rate to 5.25 per cent, both bond and share prices failed to recover after falling sharply on Thursday afternoon.

Although the German move triggered off a round of interest rate cuts throughout Europe, domestic markets felt cheated because the powerful German central bank had not paved the way for a general decline in interest rates sometime in the future.

The Bundesbank's most important interest rate — its securities repurchase rate — was held steady at six per cent on Thursday, the level which has prevailed since early December.

The Bundesbank controls short-term money market rates via this "repo" rate, the price at which it offers funds to the banking system in weekly tenders for cash.

Nigel Longley, an institutional adviser at Commerzbank, said, "the market was disappointed by the fact that the repo rate was not cut. It was interpreted as not a strong cut."

On the Frankfurt Bourse the 30-share DAX index closed at 2,151.97, up 1.09 per cent or 23.25 points from the previous floor trade close, before the Bundesbank cut the discount rate.

But it was down 10.32 points from Thursday's post-bourse finishing level.

There was a similar reaction in the bond market, which had seen dramatic initial gains after the discount move and just as dramatic falls in late Thursday trade.

Despite the cautious market reaction to the Bundesbank move, the European Commission welcomed the steps taken by other European nations to match the Germans.

"We don't really have a declaration (on rate cuts), but obviously are very satisfied with the downward movement," a spokesman for Economic Affairs Commissioner Henning Christophersen said.

On Friday, the Danish central bank cut its discount and key deposit rate to 5.50 per cent from 5.75 per cent.

Sweden cut its key marginal rate to 7.25 from 7.50 per cent, the Bank of Finland's money market tender rate fell to 4.75 from 4.95 per cent and the Bank of Spain reduced its daily intervention rate by about 0.25 to around 8.55 per cent.

Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy had moved already on Thursday. But French interest rates held steady.

## Arab states seek to cut pollution from cement plants

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states are seeking to cut pollution from their cement plants, amid growing concern in a region where environmental damage is among the worst in the world.

Officials from the 21-member Arab League will meet in Riyadh in April to discuss upgrading efficiency and introducing technology at their cement facilities to reduce pollution, their cement union has said.

The April 25-27 talks will cover "environmental problems resulting from the cement industry... and identifying methods of developing technological facilities to cut pollution," the Damascus-based union said in a report obtained here.

The conference, the first of its kind in the Arab World, will bring together Arab cement producers, Arab and foreign environmental officials and experts, and world producers of anti-pollution equipment.

Cement is among the main industries in Arab countries.

Latest figures showed Arab states produced around 66 million tonnes of cement in 1991, of which around a third are produced by the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Egypt is the top cement producer in the Arab World, with output standing at more than 13 million tonnes in 1991.

The Riyadh conference comes amidst growing environmental concerns in the Gulf and other Arab countries due to high pollution levels from car exhausts, inadequate waste disposal, desertification and persistent oil leakage.

The Gulf is among the world's most polluted regions due to a rapid growth in industries and the leakage of more than one million barrels of crude into the water every year.

## European producer cuts keep aluminium ball rolling

LONDON (R) — Aluminium prices surged to 18-month highs Friday as traders took heart from fresh promises to cut production which suggest that a global agreement to reduce the flood of metal into the market really could work.

Price on the London Metal Exchange (LME) have risen almost 20 per cent since January. On Friday the metal was worth \$1,331 a tonne, a rise of \$17 and the highest since August 1992.

The rise buoyed the rest of the industrial metals on the LME though those prices later edged off a little.

Last month in Brussels major Western and Russian producers agreed cuts were essential to bring the world's aluminium surplus under control.

Three European smelters this week announced aluminium production cuts totalling 93,000 tonnes a year, and Russian officials insisted they would uphold their end of the bargain.

"I was sceptical (about the plan) until recently. It now depends on Russia," said Neil Buxton at Metal Bulletin Research.

The lightweight metal is increasingly popular in industry where it is used to make anything from cars to drink cans. But a global recession and surging exports from Russia, which saw its domestic market collapse along with the Soviet Union, led to a fast rise in stocks, estimated by one trader at close to six months' consumption needs.

The latest announcements have helped calm an anxious market which was bearing

promises of cuts from several countries but little action in West Europe which had initially pledged to take 300,000 tonnes out of the market. The West's cuts now total around 737,000 tonnes while Russia has said its cuts already top 100,000 and should be up to 300,000 by the end of April.

"If the West cuts output by one million tonnes and Russia cuts exports by 250,000 tonnes, it would put the market balance in a 400,000-tonne deficit this year," Mr. Buxton said.

That would still not be enough to reduce stocks, which in LME warehouses alone stand at over 2.5 million tonnes.

## Gold price drops

LONDON (R) — Gold slid Friday to its lowest level in three weeks as investment funds in the United States decided to sell, bullion traders said.

The fall started on New York's COMEX market, spreading to London, where gold was fixed in the afternoon at \$379.90 an ounce, a drop of nearly \$6 from the previous day's closer.

It later slipped to around \$378.

"It was a whole different ball game when the funds came in," one dealer said, adding that there seemed no single piece of news to trigger the

selling.

Dealers said gold had looked vulnerable to correction this week, having failed to climb above \$387. The next support level for the market was expected to be around \$375.

Some dealers said there now seemed to be less chance of air strikes in Bosnia and this might have removed the incentive for precautionary buying of gold ahead of the weekend. Gold had traditionally been a safe haven for funds at times of crisis.

"The removal of that threat may have pushed forward a couple of days what was going to happen anyway," one said.

## Yen strength could intensify, reach 95 to the dollar

This report is submitted by Naser Nabalsi, private client group, Merrill Lynch-Dubai

### Overview

Fundamental view: An impasse between the U.S. and Japan over trade issues has led to a sharp surge in the yen in recent days. With the yen now trading at the JPY/USD 104 level, the Japanese unit has already appreciated beyond our previous 12-month target level of JPY/USD 105. After having moved so far, so fast, we would not be surprised to see the yen pull back a bit in coming months if the U.S. and Japan make some progress on easing trade frictions.

But prospects for large current account surpluses to persist suggest that yen strength will continue and perhaps intensify over the coming year. We have moved our 6-month target for the yen to JPY/USD 100 and our 12-month target to JPY/USD 95. We continue to look for the dollar to strengthen against European currencies over the coming year as European interest rates decline, and look for the dollar to trade at the DM/USD 1.85 level by this time next year.

Technical view: Overall, the week ended Feb. 11 was uneventful for the U.S. dollar. This is reflected by the fact that the greenback rallied against three of the six major currencies that we most regularly discuss and by the fact that the dollar index fell a modest 0.10 per cent for the week. However, the weakness of the past two days was both eventful and in line with medium term momentum oscillators which have had a downward bias for some time. It should be noted that sentiment has been deteriorating of late.

Despite the fact that we still think that the greenback is positioning itself for a strong rally over the longer term, these conflicts — together with the presence of important resistance at 97.50-98.00 — suggest that the index itself may not have a sustainable move in either direction until the conflicts are resolved. The dollar's movements against individual currencies, therefore, should be monitored more closely than the index. Nearby support is just above 94.00, with benchmark support at 90.29.

### Japanese yen

Fundamental view: An extraordinarily rapid rise of the yen in recent days to the JPY/USD 101.3 level was triggered by an impasse in U.S.-Japan trade talks that came to a head on Feb. 11 when President Clinton met Prime Minister Hosokawa. With the U.S. now threatening trade sanctions, market participants appear to have concluded that a stronger yen is warranted as well, even though there is little evidence that the U.S. is deliberately talking up the yen. The yen is likely to remain highly sensitive to U.S.-Japan political tensions in coming weeks. Trade concessions by the Japanese could lead to a pullback in the yen, while lack of progress in boosting imports would like a stronger yen to restrain Japanese exports. The recent rise of the yen could also push the Bank of Japan to

a 0.50 per cent or 0.75 per cent cut in the discount rate, which we expect will be needed in any case in coming weeks.

Although trade tensions have served as the catalyst for the latest move in the yen, we have argued for some time that persistent current account surpluses would bring renewed upward pressure on the yen. Even if Japan agrees to some market access measures for U.S. companies, we still expect it to post a current account surplus of nearly \$120 billion this year. That should help the yen to continue to trade in the JPY/USD 100-to-110 range for most of this year and we expect it to reach a level as high as JPY/USD 95 by this time next year.

Technical view: The Japanese yen gained 1.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week, and — for the third week in a row — was the strongest currency of the six we most regularly monitor. Further strength this week has carried the currency through to test the August high near 101.7/USD. Medium term momentum is constructive, sentiment indicators are still only neutral, and we have been of the view that the August-January correction has given way to a resumption of the underlying long term uptrend. This recent strength substantiates that latter point and implies a yen high near 101 in coming weeks. Benchmark support remains 113-114, with intervening support in the neighbourhood of 110-111.

### Deutsche mark

Fundamental view: The dollar has pulled back from the DM/USD 1.75 level to the DM/USD 1.72 level in sympathy with its sell-off against the yen. Despite the recent 25 basis point hike in the Fed funds rate in the U.S., the Bundesbank's delay in easing monetary policy has helped support the Deutsche mark at a time when U.S.-Japan trade frictions have raised questions about U.S. exchange rate policy. We do not expect a cut in German interest rates until the March 3 or March 17 council meetings in light of recent data on M3 money growth showing money growth well above the Bundesbank's target range of 4.5 per cent to 6.5 per cent. Still, the outlook for inflation to moderate further looks excellent, especially if the recent wage agreement in the chemical sector sets a pattern for other settlements. The chemical agreement granted an effective increase of only 1.5 per cent. German industrial production fell by 2.1 per cent in November to a new cyclical low, suggesting that the economy is faltering again after two positive quarters in 1993. The west German economy contracted 1.9 per cent in 1993, the steepest decline in output since the World War II.

We continue to look for German 3-month money rates to fall to 4.0 per cent or less by the end of this year compared with 5.80 per cent currently. We maintain our 12-month target of DM/USD 1.85, and expect the dollar to reach the DM/USD 1.80 level in 3 months.

Technical view: The Deutsche mark rallied 0.6 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Feb. 11. Medium term sentiment readings are near oversold and, while

short term momentum has been deteriorating recently, medium term oscillators appear to have bottomed. All of this suggests that the currency is still engaged in a medium term bottoming process. Indeed, it would likely require weakness through the 1.79 DM/USD.55 area to negate the strengthening momentum environment.

Thus, even though the dominant long term trend remains down, we continue to believe that the immediate pressures in coming weeks should be to the upside. Nearby resistance is 1.73, then 1.68-1.69. The mark/yen cross has moved below 60, thereby making new multi-month lows. While momentum is oversold, the cross will have to move back up through the 62.50 over the next few weeks to reverse medium term momentum from down to up. In an environment where both individual currencies are expected to rally versus the U.S. dollar, 60 remains important support and resistance in the 65.50-66.50 range will be monitored for a potentially important breakout.

### Pound Sterling

Fundamental view: The British pound rose to U.S.\$/GBP 1.48 as the dollar plunged against the yen. But the pound fell to DM/GBP 2.55 due to expectations of another near-term U.K. base rate cut coupled with increasing pessimism on an early German interest rate cut. Economic indicators released this week all point to a slowing economy. Unemployment showed an unexpected rise in January, industrial production in December was disappointing, and inflation was below expectations.

We continue to expect a 25 basis point U.K. rate cut in the second quarter to offset the impact of substantial tax increases on April 1. But we believe this will be the last cut in this cycle. By contrast, we expect short-term German rates to fall by 175 basis points in 12 months, pushing the pound up to DM/GBP 2.70. We expect the pound to depreciate to U.S.\$/GBP 1.46 in 12 months. The Fed is likely to "snug" short-term rates by 25 basis points or more this year as the U.S. economy maintains a healthy momentum.

Technical view: The British pound fell 0.6 per cent versus the U.S. dollar last week, and for the second week in a row, was the weakest of the six major currencies we most regularly monitor. This resulted in a test of the low end of the eight-month long trading range. Sentiment is neutral-to-oversold, but has been deteriorating. Short term momentum is weak and medium term oscillators now appear to be under pressure as well.

As a result, a decisive breakdown from the trading range (1.46 U.S.\$) would allow for at least a test of the 1993 low near \$1.43 and possibly long term support at \$1.40-\$1.42. Along with sterling's weakness against the U.S. dollar, the DM cross-rate also moved lower last week to below 2.57. Since momentum remains weak, the probability of a test of 2.53-2.55 has increased.

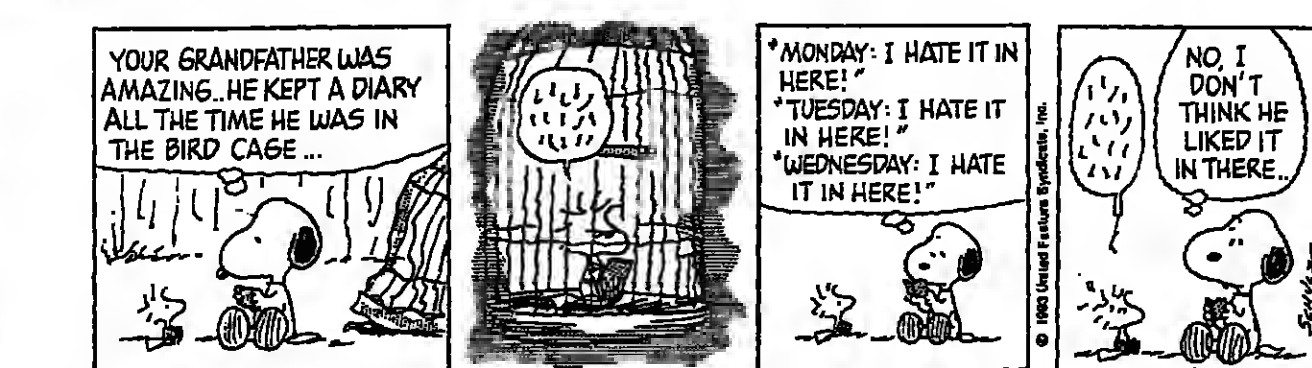
### THE BETTER HALF.

By Glasbergen

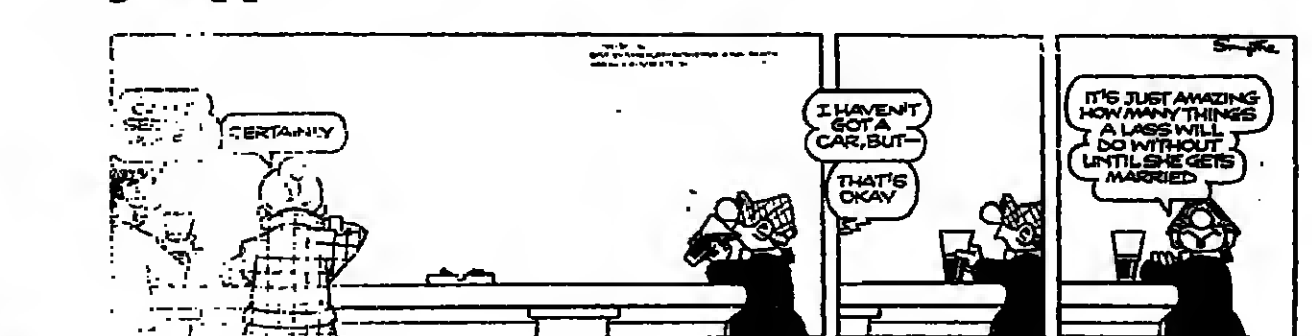


"There are many ways to put the sparks back. Try kissing with flint in your mouth."

### Peanuts



### Andy Capp



### Mutt'n'Jeff



## Jordan Times Tel. 667171

### HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY FEBRUARY 19, 1994

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**GENERAL TENDENCIES:** Unusual and beneficial contacts are in the offering early this evening so be sure to take advantage of them and have a light on the night. Avoid any over-the-top behavior that you get right information maker and don't jeopardize any asset.

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You have to be particularly careful in the afternoon. Arrange your transportation more intelligently and you travel with greater ease and speed in the future.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) You feel like going in a spending spree because you are worried. This is the worldly and part of your thinking, so think objectively instead.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Take care you do not make unkind remarks to others simply because you are worried about something. Add to present good will you now enjoy instead.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) If you think others have slighted or annoyed you, say nothing and return in kind instead of complaining. Finish boring tasks and you have more time for pleasurable things later.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Try not to argue with a good friend today just because you are frustrated. Find some better way to get ahead socially.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Be careful you do not jeopardize your good name in any way either in business or in personal life. See that your credit is good, too.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Find the right outlet through which to express your feelings and have a light on the night. Follow those who are clever and can be trusted.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) It might be best not to express certain views you have though you know them to be right. Wait for a better time. Do more studying in the meantime.

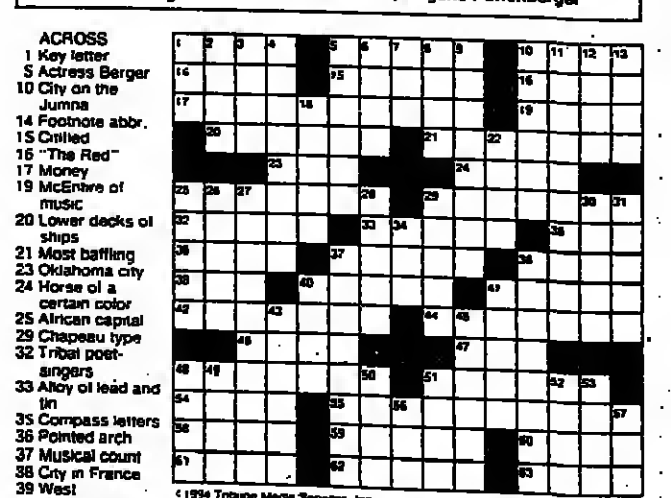
**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Get that data you have neglected from associates so that your joint projects run more smoothly instead of being critical of them.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 19) Be enthusiastic about doing the tasks you are ahead of you and keep out of trouble you could otherwise get into. Be a clever, dynamic person.

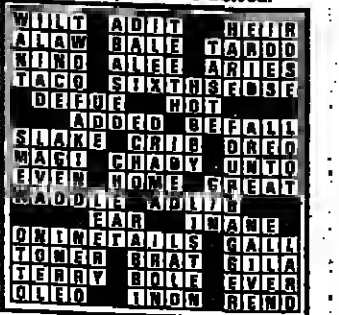
**AQUARIUS:** (January 20 to February 18) You are very anxious to have a good time, but make sure it is not so terribly expensive to make you sad later. Do not associate with undependable persons or you will regret it later.

**PISCES:** (February 19 to March 20) Have more faith in how kin are handling home affairs instead of thinking you can do much better on your own. Be sure to clear the way of anything that stands in the way of your advancement.

### THE Daily Crossword by Eugene Puffenberger



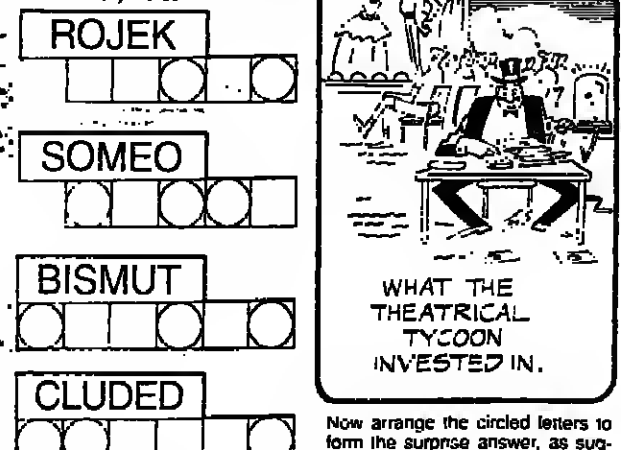
Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



### JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: (Answers tomorrow)

Saturday 5 Jumbles LIMIT NEEDY CROTCH PRISON

Answer: What the disk jockey liked most at the 'loundmat' -- THE 'SPIN' CYCLE







## Seoul: North-South dialogue must come before N. Korea-U.S. talks

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korean President Kim Young-Sam sent a letter to U.S. President Bill Clinton Friday, stressing that an exchange of envoys between the two Koreas must come before any new round of high-level talks between Washington and Pyongyang, news reports said.

The reports said Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo, currently in Washington, had been charged with delivering the letter to Mr. Clinton before he returns to Seoul Friday.

"While stating that the Seoul-Washington agreement... calls for a 'thorough and broad' approach... President Kim is said to have reiterated that the two Koreas must exchange special envoys before the next North Korea-U.S. meeting," the national Yonhap News Agency said.

Speaking to Korean reporters in Washington Friday, Mr. Han clarified however that announcement of the date of a third round of Washington-Pyongyang talks could take place before the South-North envoy exchange, but only after inspections of the North's sus-

pect nuclear sites begins. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors are expected to travel to North Korea within the coming week, after Tuesday's agreement by Pyongyang to accept inspections of its declared nuclear sites.

That agreement withheld commitment on investigations into two facilities which Pyongyang says are non-nuclear, but which Western and South Korean experts believe are used for processing and storing weapons-grade plutonium.

"With regard to the issue of the deployment of Patriots (missiles) at U.S. bases in South Korea," the United States and South Korea have agreed not to discuss the issue until the IAEA board meeting is convened," Mr. Han told reporters.

Asked whether there was any difference in opinion between Washington and Seoul over the deployment of the missile batteries, he said no decision had been made and it was not known whether General Gary E. Luck, commander of the 36,000 U.S.

forces in Korea, would repeat his request for them.

Nor, he added, was it yet clear whether such a request would be in accordance with South Korea's assessment of military needs.

"The situation now is not much different from a year ago — but then the situation was getting worse, and now there is progress," Mr. Han said when asked what difference there was between now and last March when Pyongyang first threatened to withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

That threat drew Washington into talks with Pyongyang, with which it has technically been at war since the 1950s, and led to North Korea returning to negotiations with the IAEA on Jan. 7.

Both Washington and Seoul have said that a decision on the holding of the annual joint South Korean-U.S. military exercise Team Spirit, traditionally staged in March, is in obedience, though Washington has said preparations for it are still underway.

U.S. military spokesman in

Seoul have said the preparations can be called off "at any time."

"The Team Spirit exercises were contingent upon progress we would make in resolving the nuclear question, and I think once the inspections are completed the exercises can be readjusted," Mr. Han said in an interview on CNN Television.

Meanwhile, North Korea, fighting accusations it is secretly building nuclear weapons, sought Friday to turn the tables by accusing deadly rival South Korea of stockpiling enough plutonium to make 370 atomic bombs.

The Foreign Ministry in Pyongyang issued a memorandum calling on the South to scrap what the document called its nuclear weapons development programme and remove its plutonium stockpile.

It also demanded that Seoul abandon its pressurised heavy water (PHWR) reactor at Wolsong, along with multi-purpose research reactors and post-irradiation test facilities forming "an integral centre of the plutonium production."



## Athens: Macedonia blockade will be strictly applied

ATHENS (AFP) — Athens has said that its blockade against Macedonia would be strictly applied at all customs points to all goods entering Greece bound for Skopje.

As queues of heavy goods vehicles built up at the main border post between Greece and Macedonia Thursday north of Salonika, a statement issued by the Finance Ministry said that Salonika customs officers would take charge of controlling all goods destined for Macedonia.

The statement came despite criticism from some of Greece's European partners over the blockade announced Wednesday against Macedonia in an increasingly bitter dispute over the name of the former Yugoslav republic.

But Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told Greek Television late Thursday that Athens had his "full support".

The measures announced by the Finance Ministry could lead to long delays for goods arriving in the ports of Kavala, east of Salonika, or Igoumenitsa in northwestern Greece, suspected of trying to reach Macedonia via Bulgaria or Albania.

Meanwhile in the Hague it was reported Thursday that Greece had also closed its land border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Dutch Foreign Ministry said Thursday.

Spokesman Djoek Koekock said a number of trucks, including some registered in the Netherlands, had been stopped by Greek border guards from crossing into Macedonia at Evzoni.

Greek authorities denied the land border had been closed.

The Greek press reported in Salonika that goods vehicle drivers were having to comply with a wealth of administrative measures imposed by local customs officers confused by the sudden measures or acting out of "patriotic zeal."

Two train loads composing 94 wagons carrying fuel and metal destined for Macedonia were also still being held up at the border post.

Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu announced the measures Wednesday adding that only humanitarian goods such as "food and medicines" were excluded from the blockade.

Greece, which holds the rotating presidency of the European Union (EU), said it had been constrained to make the move after the United States last week "erroneously" recognised Macedonia before the latter had responded positively to Greece's demands.

Greece accuses Macedonia of usurping a name which Athens says is solely part of Greek heritage and of harbouring expansionist ambitions over the Greek province of the same name.

Britain, Denmark, Germany and Turkey all expressed concern about the decision announced Wednesday to bar the former Yugoslav republic access to the Greek port of Salonika, effectively strangling Macedonia's oil imports.

But Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic backed Greece Thursday calling the blockade a "wise decision."

## Cambodian army reports new success

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's government army has reported a new victory in its war against the radical Khmer Rouge guerrillas, the capture of a strategic border access point near the country's far-north frontier with Thailand.

"All the Khmer Rouge guerrillas have fled towards the border — they left behind some weapons and ammunition," Cambodian army Chief of Staff Lieutenant-General Ke Kim Yan told Reuters Friday. He said three government soldiers were wounded in the attack.

The situation at Ar Sess was currently quiet, said Cambodia's top military commander.

The key border access point, 300 kilometres north of Phnom Penh was formerly known as U.N. Checkpoint CT-1 and lies close to the border triangle of Laos, Thailand and Cambodia. There has been no independent confirmation of the government's claim but if true it is another military blow for the increasingly embattled Maoist rebels.

According to the government, more than 3,000 Khmer Rouge have defected to the government side since last August.

After threatening to disrupt the U.N.-organised May elections with violence, the Khmer Rouge has demanded an advisory government role while continuing to wage a low-intensity guerrilla war.

An increase in dry season fighting between the two protagonists has caused a stalemate to political negotiations aimed at accommodating the rebel demands.

On Feb. 5 Cambodian army units captured the strategic Khmer Rouge northern headquarters at Anlong Veng calling it the biggest military success since the holding of the elections.

Government army commanders earlier said that Ar Sess, used as a guerrilla firebase to shell outlying areas of Cham Khsan, was their next military objective after Anlong Veng was secured.

The border access point lies close to the ancient temple of Preah Vihear seized by Khmer Rouge guerrillas last July.

Preah Vihear provinces' governor, General Mean Sarin, told Reuters that after the capture of Ar Sess, the next goal would be the recapture of Preah Vihear Temple.

He said the notorious one-legged guerrilla Commander Ta Mok had fled towards Trapeang Kol near the junction of the Cambodian, Lao and Thai borders.

The capture of Ar Sess will relieve pressure on the besieged town of Cham Khsan, 28 kilometres south, and allow hundreds of displaced people to return to their homes, Mr. Sarin said.

While of little military significance, the capture of Preah Vihear Temple by the Khmer Rouge caused severe embarrassment to the government.

Preah Vihear, practically accessible only from Thailand, is Cambodia's best known monument after the fabled 12th century temples of Angkor.

## Book blows up IRS for fun and profit

NEW YORK (R) — Novice author Bill Branon has the book world beaming and dreaming of huge sales with a first novel about terrorists blowing up the greatest American bureaucracy of them all — the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Never mind that the plot of Let Us Prey doesn't thicken as much as make its occasional appearance or that its characters are as real as "bit" and "bam" comic book figures or that even its author can't explain what is going on. Getting rid of the taxman is an all-American dream and Branon, furious at the way the IRS bounded one of his sons for back taxes, appears to have tapped into an anger many feel. The prestigious Book of the Month Club grabbed his book as an alternate selection, HarperCollins has put out a first printing of 10,000 — a huge figure for a hardback book — and Sylvester Stallone sent his chauffeur to the bookstore to see if this could be a vehicle worthy of "Rambo."

The plot is all over the map involving hitmen modelled after Branon's sons, a rapist whose initials are IRS and a terrorist leader of an anti-tax revolt who blows up the real IRS's regional offices, when he finally makes his appearance almost halfway through the book. Branon admits, "The book doesn't read sensibly," but defends it as a mood piece out to show anger "in the land."

An avid gambler, ex-navy dentist, intelligence operative, explosives expert and gun-mutt, Branon is hitting the talk show circuit to tell the secret of his success — do it all yourself until the big guys take notice.

**Court orders release of India's 'bandit queen'**

NEW DELHI (AFP) — The Supreme Court Friday ordered the release of parole of Phoolan Devi, India's notorious "bandit queen" who was jailed more than a decade ago for the massacre of 22 villagers to avenge her gang rape.

Judges J. S. Verma and P. B. Sawant asked Ms. Devi, held in New Delhi's maximum security Tihar Central Jail, to put up a bond to gain her freedom after 11 years in prison.

"We consider it appropriate to release her on parole pending the disposal of applications moved by the state government in various courts for withdrawal of (the) prosecution against her," the judges said. They ordered the New Delhi Police to provide protection to the notorious outlaw after her release.

Family members said she planned to live in the city, rather than go back to her village in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh. Ms. Devi, who is in her early 30s, allegedly murdered the massacre of 22 upper-caste Hindus on Feb. 14, 1981 in the Uttar Pradesh village of Behmai to avenge her rape by men from the village. Police say she was the leader of a bandit gang whose members shouted slogans hailing Devi after gunning down more than two dozen men on the edge of a river, several of them survived.

Ms. Devi, who was in police uniform when she reportedly opened fire, was looking for two men who allegedly abducted and murdered her lover and raped her for days before she managed to give them the slip one night.

The cold-blooded killings made her a household name in India and she went on a crime spree which terrorised the Chambal Valley, her exploits attracted worldwide attention and she was the subject of several books and movies.

**Bobbitt fathered child out of wedlock**

NIAGARA FALLS, New York (AFP) — Blood tests strengthened a paternity case filed against John Bobbitt by a woman who said she dated him a year before his wife cut off his penis. "John, this may be the only child you will ever have. Doesn't he deserve better from a father than lame and false details?" appealed Bearice Williams Thursday. Ms. Williams held a press conference in Niagara Falls, New York to announce DNA test results which give a 99.9 per cent likelihood that Bobbitt fathered her son, Andrew. It is uncertain yet whether Bobbitt, whose wife Lorena said she cut off his penis for raping her, will be able to have children though doctors did manage to reattach the organ. Mr. Bobbitt's attorney said he might challenge the results and get his own genetics expert to disprove them.

## S. Africa democracy forum to meet Monday

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's multi-party democracy negotiating forum is to meet Monday to consider amendments to the interim constitution aimed at averting a boycott by conservatives of April's first all-race elections.

ANC Secretary-General Cyril Ramaphosa said Friday the African National Congress and the government had agreed to a Monday meeting of the forum at the World Trade Centre where the interim constitution was thrashed out over two years.

"Faxes are being sent out to all political parties... invitations will go to all parties that were part of the negotiating council at one stage or another," he told a news briefing.

These would include the pro-apartheid Conservative Party, the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana black homelands and the white Afrikaner Volksunie (AVU), all of which quit the talks in protest last year.

Mr. Ramaphosa said the forum was expected to discuss a constitutional package proposed by the government and the ANC to draw the Freedom Alliance of separatist whites and autonomy-seeking black homeland leaders into the April 26-28 elections.

Inkatha leader Mangosuthu Buthezi dismissed the proposals outlined by ANC President Nelson Mandela Wednesday as "cheap politicking."

But they have drawn a more guarded response from his allies in the right-wing alliance who have asked for more details.

Mr. Ramaphosa said the ANC was willing to discuss its proposals with the Freedom Alliance. "We are prepared to look at what their response is and sit down and see what else needs to be done for an all-inclusive settlement," he said.

He said the standing committee of parliament was expected to meet next Wednesday, and parliament itself would likely reconvene on Feb. 28 or March 1 to discuss amendments to the interim constitution it passed in December.

It would also have to amend the electoral act to allow for separate ballots for the national and provincial legislatures in April instead of a single ballot and allow more time for parties to register.

Mr. Ramaphosa said the ANC had held a bilateral meeting with the government Thursday and they were meeting again Friday to "formalise" the package.

The ANC was also meeting the white right-wing Afrikaner People's Front (APF) Friday, the APF has demanded a Volksstaat — white homeland — for Afrikaners.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Gamsakhurdia's body flown to Chechnya

MOSCOW (AFP) — The body of former Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who committed suicide in December, was flown to Grozny — the capital of the Russian Republic of Chechnya — Thursday after being exhumed, the agency Interfax reported. Earlier his body had been identified in Senaki in western Georgia after having been exhumed from a grave in the courtyard of a house in the village of Jikhaskari, close to Zugdidi. Representatives from Lithuania, Georgia, Chechnya and Ingushetia attended the identification, requested by the family which was carried out by three Georgian doctors. ITAR-TASS said, Mr. Gamsakhurdia committed suicide on Dec. 31, but his wife, Manana, still lives in Grozny, the Chechen capital. There have been conflicting reports on Mr. Gamsakhurdia's death, and where he was buried. He was a personal friend of Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev, and became Georgia's first democratically-elected president in May 1991, winning 87 per cent of the vote. He killed himself after the failure of an armed uprising by supporters known as Zviadists in western Georgia against Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze.

### Nepalese premier asked to resign

KATHMANDU (AFP) — Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has been asked by the head of his party to step down as Nepal's prime minister, a highly placed source in the Nepali Congress (NC) Party said Friday. The NC Party President Krishna Prasad Bhattarai had advised Mr. Koirala to resign, from office following days of protests against the prime minister over his handling of recent by-elections, the source said. If Mr. Koirala does not resign by Sunday, a party committee will take disciplinary action which would automatically lead to his expulsion from the party, it added.

### Indonesia quake death toll hits 186

LIWA, Indonesia (AFP) — The death toll from a strong earthquake that shook the south Sumatra province of Lampung early Wednesday has risen to 186 people, with more than 2,000 injured, according to the relief centre here. Statistics on the relief centre board show 186 dead and 2,389 others injured, 1,016 seriously. The powerful quake also damaged 5,109 houses, 109 schools, 111 buildings of worship, 19 district health centres, destroyed 15 bridges and 34-kilometres (21 miles) of road. West Lampung district chief Umpu Singa said damage was estimated to reach 117 billion rupiah (\$55 million). Aftershocks continue to shake the area, but according to an official at the Meteorological Office, Engkon Kertapati, the magnitudes were in the range of 2.5 to three on the Richter Scale.

### India agrees to ICRC survey in Kashmir

GENEVA (AFP) — India has allowed the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit the strife-torn northern state of Kashmir for humanitarian purposes, a spokesman said Friday. "The Indian authorities have invited the ICRC to carry out a mission in the near future to Jammu and Kashmir to assess the humanitarian situation," according to the Geneva-based organisation. The visit was arranged on Feb. 9 during a meeting in New Delhi between the Indian Home Secretary N.N. Vohra, and ICRC delegate general for Asia Jean-Michel Monod. It was agreed that the ICRC would propose dates for the mission, which will first deal with the protection of civilian populations. The New Delhi meeting immediately followed "an ICRC seminar on international humanitarian law for senior officers of Indian police and paramilitary forces in Hyderabad," according to the Red Cross.

### 11 die in Philippine carnival blast

COTABATO, Philippines (R) — Eleven revellers were killed and 23 wounded Friday when a hand grenade was tossed into a fun fair crowded with hundreds of people, police in the southern Philippines said. Almost simultaneously, a home-made bomb exploded outside the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) offices in another southern city but no one was hurt. The carnival blast in Isulan town near Cotabato City was the second major bombing attack in the troubled southern region of Mindanao, 800 kilometre south of Manila, in two months. Six people were killed when suspected Muslim extremists bombed a Roman Catholic cathedral in the main Mindanao city of Davao at Christmas. Police Commander Akmad Mamalinta said the fun fair in Isulan was packed with hundreds of revellers celebrating ahead of the town's religious fiesta when the grenade exploded shortly before 1 a.m. As the crowd scrambled for their lives, parts fell from some of the rides, causing more injuries. Some of the injured were trampled in the stampede, witnesses said.

### Fujimori swears in new cabinet

LIMA (AFP) — President Alberto Fujimori swore in a new cabinet Thursday following a cabinet crisis sparked by his handling of a high profile human rights case. Prime Minister Alfonso Bustamante resigned Wednesday following a dispute with Mr. Fujimori over a controversial law to move the trial of army troops charged with kidnapping and killing nine students and a lecture as part of an anti-Shining Path crackdown in July 1992. A general three colonels, two majors, one captain and one lieutenant had been scheduled to go before a civilian court but fought to go before military authorities instead in hopes of a more sympathetic hearing. A law moving the trial was passed on Feb. 10, despite bitter opposition, as the Supreme Court deliberated over which court had jurisdiction.

## Armenia shoots down Azeri jet

YEREVAN (Agencies) — Armenia shot down an Azeri Sukhoi SU-24 ground attack aircraft over its territory and captured the pilot, a mercenary from Kyrgyzstan, the Armenian Defence Ministry said Friday.

The aircraft was one of two which Thursday strayed across the frontier in the eastern district of Vardeniz, near the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, a ministry spokesman said.

An Azeri Defence Ministry spokesman in Baku had no immediate comment on the announcement.

The Armenian Defence Ministry spokesman, Gagik Martoyan, said two planes crossed into Armenian airspace. Anti-aircraft units opened fire on the SU-24 as it approached Vardeniz town, apparently intending to attack.

The second intruder, a SU-25 reconnaissance plane, turned back to Azerbaijan, Mr. Martoyan said.

A second crew member had also baled out of the stricken plane but had come to ground in the northern part of Karabakh, which lies formally inside Azerbaijan, though under Armenian control.

Martoyan said details of his fate were still being sought.

The Armenian spokesman said the captured pilot was a 44-year-old Tatar named as Marat Ishkovich.

He was hired in the Central Asian Republic of Kyrgyzstan for a fee of \$1,000 per month plus \$300 per sortie to fly in the Azeri Air Force, Mr. Martoyan said.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have been fighting an undeclared war over Karabakh for the past six years. Thousands of people have been killed and tens of thousands, mainly Azeris, displaced.

The territory, mainly inhabited by Armenians, was given to Azerbaijan by the Kremlin in 1923.

At their last meeting, on Dec. 15, Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Major presented their Anglo-Irish joint declaration — the Downing Street Declaration — outlining an historic

## Major, Reynolds to meet on Ulster peace process

LONDON (AFP) — Amid fresh violence in Northern Ireland, Prime Minister John Major of Britain and Albert Reynolds of Ireland meet here Saturday on their Ulster peace plan, still awaiting a response from Sinn Fein.

Before attending an England-Ireland rugby match in the afternoon, the premiers will meet at Mr. Major's Downing Street office with Irish Foreign Secretary Dick Spring and British Northern Ireland Secretary Patrick Mayhew, a spokesman said.

At their last meeting, on Dec. 15, Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Major presented their Anglo-Irish joint declaration — the Downing Street Declaration — outlining an historic

framework for peace in Ulster. That document notably offered Sinn Fein, political wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA), a place at the negotiating table on condition the IRA renounced violence for at least three months.

The declaration does not exclude the principle of a unified Ireland, which the Catholic-based IRA wants.

But it guarantees that Britain would not cut Northern Ireland loose without the consent of the province's residents, the majority of whom are Protestant.

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams has asked for "clarification" of the declaration, neither accepting nor rejecting its terms.

## Chinese plane hijacked to Taiwan, 11th since April

TAIPEI (Agencies) — A Chinese asylum-seeker posing as a policeman and accompanied by his family hijacked a Chinese airliner to Taiwan Friday, the 11th such hijacking since last April.

Taiwan detained the man for trial on air piracy charges but in a break with previous practice it forcibly sent the four family members who had travelled with him, his foster mother, wife and two sons aged eight and 10, back to China.

Lin Wenqiang, 35, dressed in the uniform of a Chinese policeman, used a fruit knife and a fake bomb, a teacup stuffed with toilet paper, to force a China Southwest Airlines Boeing 737 carrying 130 people to Taipei.

He surrendered to Taiwan authorities and requested asylum for himself and his family. The plane and its crew members and other passengers, including Mr. Lin's family, were sent back to China four hours later.

Mr. Lin's wife, Huang Chunmian, 32, screamed and struggled with police officers as

she was dragged back aboard the plane at Taipei's international airport.

It was the first time in the string of hijackings that Taiwan had forcibly repatriated family members not accused of air piracy. Two young sons of hijackers had remained in Taiwan after previous hijackings.

The airliner, carrying 122 passengers including two Singaporeans as well as eight crew, was on a domestic flight from the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu to Fuzhou in the southeast when it was hijacked. Nobody was injured.

Mr. Lin's profession was unclear as he carried several business cards, officials said. One identified him as a sales manager at an electric appliance firm in the central Chinese city of Changsha, another as a sales manager for China's "reform through labour" penal camp system.

Officials quoted Mr. Lin as saying he wanted to escape corruption in China and hijacked the plane after Chinese authorities made it difficult for

him to open a company.

Fourteen Chinese asylum-seekers hijacked planes to Taiwan in the ten previous incidents. Taipei's refusal to repatriate them has become a major source of tension between Taiwan and China, political enemies since the civil war ended in 1949.

"The hijacking damages relations between the two sides... hijacking is a serious crime in Taiwan and we cannot tolerate it," Taiwan's Vice Justice Minister Chiang Hao said.

Four rounds of bilateral talks have failed to reach agreement on a pact under which Taiwan would send the hijackers back. The two sides will resume talks in Beijing in late March.

Meanwhile, the International Airline Passengers Association (IAPA) has said to take a plane in China is to dice with death.

Colombia, strongly criticised by the IAPA, pales in comparison to China, added the association in its latest bimonthly Travel Safety Alert newsletter. "Even if you are enough of a

daredevil to fly in Colombia on a stormy night, don't fly in China," said IAPA, which listed eight plane crashes in China in 18 months.

"If China started doing everything right yesterday, the problems could not be solved in 1994 or even by the end of the century," commented IAPA.

The Association said the country's air traffic control system was primitive, qualified pilots and engineers were in short supply, maintenance poor and security not existent.

David Sempler, IAPA's executive director, said figures reveal China had one accident per 100,000 domestic flights compared to one per 200,000 in Colombia and India and one per 250,000 in South Korea.

The association listed the safest major airlines as American Airlines, British Airways, Delta, Lufthansa, Scandinavian Airlines and Southwest.

Safe mid-sized carriers included Ansett Australia, Saudi Arabian Airlines, Canadian Airlines International and All-Nippon.







